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PART

XXXII

THE MAHABHARATA

OF

KRISHNA-DWAIPAYANA VYASA

TRANSLATED

INTO

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of little understanding and desirous of seizing the lotus-eyed, like idiots and children desiring to seize a blazing fire by means of their garments?—Hearing these words of Sātayaki, Vidura endued with great foresight said these words unto the mighty-armed Dhritarāshtra in the midst of the Kurus:—‘O king, O chastiser of foes, the hour of all thy sons is come, for they are endeavoring to perpetrate a highly infamous deed however incapable they may be of actually accomplishing it! Alas, united together they desire to vanquish this younger brother of Vāsava, and seize this lotus-eyed one! Indeed, encountering this tiger among men, this invincible and irresistible one, they will all perish like insects on a blazing fire! If this Janārdhana wisheth, he can send all of them, even if they battle together, into the abode of Yama, like an enraged lion despatching a herd of elephants! He will, however, never do any such sinful and censurable act. This best of persons, of unfading glory, will never deviate from virtue!’—After Vidura had said these words, Keçava, casting his eyes on Dhritarāshtra, said in the midst of those well-meaning persons listening unto one another,—‘O king, if these (wights) desire to chastise me by using violence, permit them to chastise me, O monarch, or me to chastise them, for I dare chastise all of them together that are so excited with rage! I will not, however, perpetrate any sinful and censurable act! Coveting the possessions of the Pāndavas, thy sons will lose their own! If they desire to perpetrate such a deed, Yudhishthira’s object then will be (easily) accomplished, for this very day, O Bhārata, seizing these with all that follow them, I can make them over to the sons of Prithā! What is there that is difficult of attainment to me? I will not, however, O Bhārata, commit in thy presence, O great monarch, any such censurable deed that can proceed only from wrath and a sinful understanding! Let it be, O king, as this Duryodhana desireth! I give permission, O monarch, to all thy sons to do it!’

“Hearing these words (of Keçava), Dhritarāshtra addressed Vidura, saying,—‘Quickly bring hither the sinful Duryodhana who is so covetous of sovereignty, with his friends,

brothers, and followers, if, indeed, making one more effort I can bring him to the right path !

"Thus addressed by Dhritarāshtra, Khattri once more caused the unwilling Duryodhana to enter the court with his brothers and surrounded by the kings (that followed him). King Dhritarāshtra then addressed Duryodhana surrounded by Karna and Dusṣāsana and all those kings, saying,—‘O wretch of accumulated sins, having for thy allies men of despicable acts, infamous is the deed that thou, uniting with sinful friends, seekest to do ! Of little understanding, thou infamy of thy race, one like thee alone can seek to do an act so infamous and disapproved by the good, however incapable it may be of being actually achieved ! Uniting with sinful allies, wishest thou to chastise this invincible and irresistible one of eyes like lotus-leaves ? Like a child wishing to have the moon, seekest thou, O fool, to do that which cannot be done by the very gods headed by Vāsava with all their strength ? Knowest thou not that Keçava who is incapable of being borne in battle by gods and men and *Gandharvas* and *Asuras* and *Uragas* ? Like the wind which none can seize with his hands, like the moon which no hand can reach, like the Earth which none can support on his head, Keçava is incapable of being seized by force !’

"After Dhritarāshtra had said these words, Vidura, (casting) his eyes on Duryodhana, addressed that vindictive son of Dhritarāshtra, saying,—‘O Duryodhana, listen now to these words of mine ! At the gates of *Saubha*,* that foremost of monkeys known by the name of *Dwivida* covered Keçava with a mighty shower of stones ! Desirous of seizing Mādhava by putting forth all his prowess and exertion, he did not yet succeed in seizing him. Seekest thou to seize that Keçava by force ? When *Cauri* went to *Prāgyotisha*, *Naraka* with all the *Dānavas* succeeded not in seizing him there ! Seekest thou to seize him by force ? Slaying that *Naraka* in battle, he brought away (from his city) a thousand damsels and married them all according to the ordinance. In the city of

* The flying city of *Calwa*.—T.

Nirmochana, six thousand mighty *Asuras* failed to seize him with their nooses. Seekest thou to seize that Keçava by force? While only a child, he slew Putana and Çakuni, and O bull of Bharata's race, he held up the mountains of Govardhana (on his little finger) for protecting the kine (from a continuous rain)! He hath also slain *Arishta*, and *Dhenuka*, and *Chānura* of great strength, and *Açwarāja*, and Kansa the doer of evil! He hath slain Jarāsandha, and Vakra, and Ciçupāla of mighty energy, and Vāna, in battle, and numerous other kings also have been slain by him. Of immeasurable might, he vanquished king Varuna and also Pāvaka (Agni), and on the occasion of bringing (down from the celestial regions) the (heavenly flower called) *Pārijāta*, he defeated the lord of Cachi himself! While floating on the vasty deep he slew Madhu and Kaitabha, and in another birth he slew *Hayagriva* (Horse-necked.)* He is the maker of everything, but is himself made by none! He is the Cause of all Power! Whatever Cauri wisheth, he accomplisheth without any effort. Knowest thou not the sinless Govinda of terrible prowess and incapable of deterioration, this one resembling an angry snake of virulent poison, this mass of energy? In seeking to use violence towards Krishna endued with mighty arms and unwearied by exertion, thou wilt, with all thy followers, perish like an insect falling upon fire!"

SECTION CXXX.

Vaiçampāyana said.—"After Vidura had said this, Keçava, that slayer of hostile divisions,† endued with great energy, addressed Dhritarāshtra's son Duryodhana and said,—I

* *Swapat* is sleeping or lying down in a recumbent posture. *Ekārnava* is lit. one ocean, i. e. the whole Earth under water and when there was nothing but water all around. This refers to the universal deluge. The *Asura* Hayagriva was slain because of his having stolen away the *Vedas*.—T.

† *Puga* is a crowd or cluster. The meaning of the compound is "slayer of crowds of foes," i. e. one killing hundreds at a time.—T.

delusion, O Suyodhana, thou regardest me to be alone, and it is for this, O thou of little understanding, that thou seekest to make me a captive after vanquishing me with violence! Here, however, are all the Pāndavas and all the Vrishnis and Andhakas! Here are all the *Adityas*, the *Rudras*, and the *Vasus*, with all the great *Rishis*!—Saying this, Keçava, that slayer of hostile heroes, burst out into a loud laughter. And as the high-souled Cauri laughed, from his body that resembled a blazing fire issued myriads of gods, each of lightning effulgence, and not bigger than the thumb! And on his forehead appeared Brahman, and on his breast Rudra. And on his arms appeared the regents of the world, and from his mouth issued Agni, the *Adityas*, the *Sāddhyas*, the *Vasus*, the *Açwins*, the *Maruts* with Indra, and the *Viçvedevas*. And myriads of *Yakshas*, and *Gandharvas*, and *Rākshasas* also, of the same measure and form, issued thence. And from his two arms issued Sankarshana* and Dhananjaya. And Arjuna stood on his right, bow in hand, and Rāma stood on his left, armed with the plough. And behind him stood Bhima, and Yudhishtira, and the two sons of Mādri, and before him were all the Andhakas and the Vrishnis with Praddyumna and other chiefs bearing mighty weapons upraised. And on his diverse arms were seen the conch, the discus, the mace, the bow called *Cārnga*, the plough, the javelin, the *Nandaka*, and every other weapon, all shining with effulgence and upraised for striking. And from his eyes and nose and ears and every part of his body, issued fierce sparks of fire mixed with smoke. And from the pores of his body issued sparks of fire like unto the rays of the Sun. And beholding that awful form of the high-souled Keçava, all the kings closed their eyes with affrighted hearts, except Drona, and Bhishma, and Vidura endued with great intelligence, and the greatly-blessed Sanjaya, and the *Rishis* possessed of wealth of asceticism, for the divine Janārdana gave unto these celestial sight on the occasion. And beholding in the (Kuru) court that highly wonderful sight, celestial drums beat (in the

* Valarama, also called Rāma.—T.

sky) and a floral shower fell (upon him)!* And the whole Earth trembled (at the time) and the oceans were agitated. And, O bull of Bharata's race, all the denizens of the earth were filled with great wonder. Then that tiger among men, that chastiser of foes, withdrew that divine and highly wonderful and diverse-looking form of his endued with every prosperity! And arm-in-arm with Sātyaki on one side and Hridikā's son (Kritavarman) on the other, and obtaining the permission of the *Rishis*, the slayer of Madhu went out. And during the uproar that then took place, the *Rishis*, Nārada and others, vanished for repairing to their respective places. And this also was another wonderful incident that happened. And seeing that tiger among men leave the court, the Kauravas with all the kings followed him, like the gods following Indra. Cauri, however, of immeasurable soul, without bestowing a single thought on those that followed him, issued from the court, like a blazing fire mixed with smoke. And he beheld (at the gate his charioteer) Dāruka waiting with his large white car furnished with rows of tinkling bells, decked with golden ornaments, and endued with great speed, and the clatter of whose wheels resembled the roar of clouds, and which was covered all over with white tiger-skins, and unto which were harnessed his steeds Caivya (and others).† And there also appeared, mounted on his car, that favorite hero of the Vrishnis, the mighty car-warrior Kritavarman the son of Hridikā.‡ And as that chastiser of foes, Cauri, who had his car ready, was about to depart, king Dhritarāshtra addressed him once more and said,—‘O grinder of foes, thou

* Some editions have 5 *ślokas* here about Dhritarāshtra's prayer to Keçava for eye-sight in order to behold Keçava's universal form. The Burdwan text omits them properly. They are evidently an interpolation.

† Literally, “Dāruka showed himself there with &c., &c.”—T.

‡ The passage, *supra*, about Krishna's issuing out of the court arm-in-arm with Sātyaki on one side and Kritavarman on the other is an interpolation. Kritavarman could not be within the court. Asked by Sātyaki to wait at the gate with his troops arrayed for battle, he was staying at the gate where he is now seen.—T.

hast seen, O Janārdhana, the power I wield over my sons ! Thou hast, indeed, witnessed all with thy own eyes ! Nothing now is unknown to thee ! Seeing me endeavour* to bring about peace between the Kurus, in fact, knowing the state (in which I am), it behoveth thee not to entertain any suspicions regarding me ! O Keçava, I have no sinful feelings towards the Pāndavas. Thou knowest what words have been spoken by me to Suyodhana ! The Kauravas and all the kings of the Earth also know, O Mādhava, that I have made every endeavour to bring about peace ! ”

Vaiçampāyana continued.—“The mighty-armed Janārdhana then addressed Dhritarāshtra, and Drona, and the grandsire Bhishmā, and Kshattri, and Vālhika, and Kripa, and said,—“Ye have yourselves witnessed all that hath happened in the assembly of the Kurus, viz, how the wicked Duryodhana, like an uneducated wretch left the court from anger, and how king Dhritarāshtra also describeth himself to be powerless ! With the permission of you all I will now go back to Yudishthira ! ”—Saluting them, that bull amongst men, Cauri, then mounted his car and set out. And those heroic bulls amongst the Bharatas, those mighty bowmen, viz, Bhishma, Drona, and Kripa, and Kshattri, and Dhritarāshtra, and Açwatthāman, and Vikarna, and that mighty car-warrior Yuyutshu, all began to follow him. And Keçava, on his large white car furnished with rows of tinkling bells, proceeded then, in the very sight of the Kurus, to the abode of his paternal aunt (Kunti).”

SECTION CXXXI.

aid.—“Entering her abode and worshipping her feet, Keçava represented to her briefly all that had transpired in the assembly of the Kurus. And Vāsudeva said,—“Diverse words, worthy of being accepted and fraught with

* For *Yatamīnum* some texts read *Hatamānum*, meaning that “in desiring to bring about peace, I have been disgraced or humiliated (by my son rejecting my counsels).”

reasons, were said both by myself and the *Rishis*, but Duryodhana accepted them not. As regard Suyodhana and his followers, their hour is come.* With thy leave now, I will speedily repair unto the Pāṇdavas! What should I say unto the Pāṇdavas as thy instructions to them? Tell me that, O thou endued with great wisdom! I desire to hear thy words!

"Kunti said,—O Keçava, say unto king Yudhishtira of virtuous soul these words:—Thy virtue, O son, is decreasing greatly! Do not act vainly! O king, like a reader of the *Vedas* incapable of catching their real meaning, and, therefore, truly unlearned, thy understanding, affected by only the words of the *Vedas*, vieweth virtue alone.† Cast thy eyes on the duties of thy own order, as ordained by the Self-create! For all ruthless deeds and for the protection of the people, from his (Brahman's) arms was created the Kshatriya who is to depend upon the prowess of his own arms! Listen, an instance is cited in this connection, that hath been heard by me from the aged. In days of yore, Vaiçravana, having been gratified, made a gift of this Earth to the royal sage Muchukunda. The latter, without accepting the gift, said,—*I desire to enjoy that sovereignty which is won by prowess of arms*.—At this, Vaiçravana was highly delighted and filled with wonder. King Muchukunda then, fully observing the duties of the Kshatriya order, ruled this earth, having conquered it by the prowess of his arms. Then again, a sixth part of the virtue practised by subjects well protected by the king, is obtained, O Bhārata, by the king! The virtue again that the king himself practiseth conferreth godhead on him, while if he perpetrateth sin, he goeth to hell. The penal code, properly applied by the ruler, maketh the four orders adhere to their respective duties, and leadeth to an acquisition (by the ruler himself) of virtue;

* Literally, "Suyodhana's followers are all ripe under the influence of Time."—T.

† *Crotriya* is one learned in the *Vedas*. *Mundaka* is explained by Nilakantha as *Arthajnāna-çunya*. *Avipaçchit* is unlearned. *Anuvakata* is lost or affected by only the words (of the *Vedas*).—T.

(profit, and salvation).* When the king properly abideth by the penal code without making any portion of it a dead letter, then that best of periods called the *Krita yuga* setteth in. Let not this doubt be thine, viz, whether the era is the cause of the king or the king the cause of the era, for (know this to be certain that) the king is the cause of the era!† It is the king that createth the *Krita*, the *Tretā*, or the *Dwāpara* age. Indeed, it is the king that is the cause of also the fourth *Yuga* (viz, the *Kali*). That king who causeth the *Krita* age to set in, enjoyeth heaven exceedingly. That king who causeth the *Tretā* age to set in, doth enjoy heaven but not exceedingly. For his causing the *Dwāpara* age to set in, a king enjoyeth heaven according to his due. The king, however, who causeth the *Kali* age to set in, earneth sin exceedingly. Thereupon that king of wicked deeds resideth in hell for countless years. Indeed, the king's sins affect the world, and the world's sins affect him. Observe thou those kingly duties of thine that befit thy ancestry. That is not the conduct of a royal sage in which thou wishest to abide! Indeed, he that is stained by weakness of heart and adhereth to compassion, and is unsteady, never obtaineth the merit born of cherishing his subjects. That understanding according to which thou art now acting was never wished (to thee) by Pāndu, or myself, or thy grandsire, while we uttered blessings on thee before! Sacrifice, gift, ascetic merit, and bravery, subjects and children, greatness of soul, and might, and energy,‡—these were always prayed by me for thee! Men and gods, when duly worshipped, become gratified and always bestow long life, wealth, and children, and *Swāhā* and *Swadhā*. The mother and the

* *Dharmebhyas niyacchati* is literally "restricteth (the king) to virtue and the others!"—T.

† What Kunti seeks to inculcate here is that the righteousness or unrighteousness of an era depends directly on the character of the king who rules during that era. It is not true that the king is sinful because the era is sinful; on the other hand, an era is sinful because the king is so. It always depends upon the king himself as to whether the period of his reign should be virtuous or the contrary.—T.

‡ For *Ojas*, the Burdwan Pundits read *āyus* meaning long life.—T.

father, as also the gods, always desire liberality and gift and study and sacrifice and sway over subjects for their children. Whether all this be righteous or unrighteous, you are to practise it in consequence of your very birth. (Behold, O Krishna, so far from doing all this), though born in a high race, they are yet destitute of the very means of support, and are afflicted with misery ! Hungry men, approaching a brave and bountiful monarch, are gratified and live by his side. What virtue can be superior to this ? A virtuous person, upon acquiring a kingdom, should in this world make all persons his own, attaching some by gift, some by force, and some by sweet words. A Brāhmana should adopt mendicancy ; a Kshatriya should protect (subjects) ; a Vaiçya should earn wealth ; and a Cudra should serve the other three. Mendicancy, therefore, is forbidden to thee ! Nor is agriculture suited to thee. Thou art a Kshatriya and, therefore, the protector of all in distress. Thou art to live by the prowess of thy arms. O thou of mighty arms, recover thy paternal share of the kingdom which thou hast lost, by conciliation, or working disunion among thy foes, or gift of money, or violence, or well-directed policy ! What can be a matter of greater grief than that I, deprived of friends, should live upon food supplied by others, after having brought thee forth, thou enhancer of the joys of friends ? Fight, according to the practices of kings ! Do not sink thy ancestors (in infamy) ! With thy merit worn out, do not, with thy younger brothers, obtain a sinful end '—' "

SECTION CXXXII.

"Kunti said,—In this connection, O chastiser of foes, is cited an old story of the conversation between Vidulā and her son. It behoveth thee to say unto Yudhishtira anything that can be gathered from this or anything more beneficial than that !

"There was a high-born dame of great foresight, named Vidulā. She was famous, slightly wrathful, of crooked disposition, and devoted to Kshatriya virtues. Well-educated, she was known to all the kings of the Earth. Of great learning, she

had listened to the speeches and instructions of diverse men. And the princess Vidulā one day rebuked her own son who, after his defeat by the king of the *Sindhus*, lay prostrate with heart depressed by despair. And she said,—Thou art not my son, O enhancer of the joys of foes! Begotten thou hast not been by myself and thy father! Whence hast thou come? Without wrath as thou art, thou canst not be counted as a man! Thy features betray thee to be a eunuch! Sinkest thou in despair as long as thou livest? If thou art desirous of thy own welfare, bear thou the burthen (of thy affairs on thy shoulders)! Do not disgrace thy soul! Do not suffer it to be gratified with a little! Set thy heart on thy welfare, and be not afraid! Abandon thy fears! Rise, O coward! Do not lie down thus, after thy defeat, delighting all thy foes and grieving thy friends, and reft of all sense of honor! Little streams are filled up with only a small quantity of water. The palms of a mouse are filled with only a small quantity. A coward is soon gratified, with acquisitions that are small! Rather perish in plucking the fangs of a snake than die miserably like a dog! Put forth thy prowess even at the risk of thy life! Like a hawk that fearlessly rangeth the sky, do thou also wander fearlessly, or put forth thy prowess, or silently watch thy foes for an opportunity! Why dost thou lie down like a carcass or like one smitten by thunder! Rise, O coward, do not slumber after having been vanquished by the foe! Do not disappear from the sight of all so miserably! Make thyself known by thy deeds! Never occupy the intermediate, the low, or the lowest station! Blaze up (like a well-fed fire)! Like a brand of *Tinduka* wood, blaze up even for a moment, but never smoulder, from desire of life, like a flameless fire of paddy chaff! It is better to blaze up for a moment than smoke for ever and ever! Let no son be born in a royal race, who is either exceedingly fierce or exceedingly mild! Repairing to the field of battle and achieving every great feat that is

* For *Urjitas* some texts read *Garjitas* which is unpoetical, if not unmeaning. *Urjitas* is literally blazing up or swelling. *Jaghanya* is low but *Adhas* seems to indicate something lower.—T

possible for man to achieve, a brave man is freed from the debt he oweth to the duties of the Kshatriya order. Such a person never disgraceth his ownself. Whether he gaineth his object or not, he that is possessed of sense never indulgeth in grief. On the other hand, such a person accomplisheth what should be next done, without caring for even his life! Therefore, O son, display thy prowess, or obtain that end which is inevitable! Why, indeed, dost thou live, disregarding the duties of thy order? * All thy religious rites, O enunch, and all thy achievements are gone! The very root of all thy enjoyments is cut off! What for then dost thou live? If fall and sink one must, he should seize the foe by the hips (and thus fall *with* the foe)! Even if one's roots are cut off, he should not yet give way to despair! Horses of high mettle put forth all their prowess for dragging or bearing heavy weights. Remembering their behaviour, muster all thy strength and sense of honor! Know also in what thy manliness consists! Exert thyself in raising that race which hath sunk in consequence of thee! He that hath not achieved a great feat forming the subject of men's conversation, only increaseth the tale of humanity! He is neither man or woman! He whose fame is not sounded in respect of charity, asceticism, truth, learning and acquisition of wealth, is only his mother's excreta. On the other hand, he that surpasseth others in learning, asceticism, wealth, prowess, and deeds, is (truly) a man! It behoveth thee not to adopt the idle, wretched, infamous, and miserable profession of mendicancy that is worthy only of a coward † Friends never derive any happiness on obtaining that weak person for a friend at whose sight foes are delighted, who is despised by men, who is without seats and robes, who is gratified with small acquisitions, who is destitute, and who hath no courage, and is low. Alas, exiled from our kingdom, driven from home, deprived of all means of enjoyment and pleasure, and destitute of resources, we shall have to

* *Dharmam agratas kritvā*; Nilakantha supposes that *agratas* is used ironically for *prishthatas*. Literally, therefore, it should be "keeping thy duties at thy back," in the sense of disregarding them.—T.

† *Jalmin* is idle.—T.

perish from want of the very means of life! Misbehaving in the midst of those that are good, and the destroyer of thy race and family, by bringing thee forth, O Sanjaya, I have brought forth Kali himself in the shape of a son! Oh, let no woman bring forth such a son (as thou) that art without wrath, without exertion, without energy, and that art the joy of foes! Do not smoulder! Blaze thou up, effectively displaying thy prowess! Slay thy foes! For but a moment, for ever so small a space of time, blaze thou up on the heads of thy enemies! He is a man who cherisheth wrath and forgiveth not! He, on the other hand, who is forgiving and without wrath, is neither a man nor woman! Contentment and softness of heart, and these two, *viz.* want of exertion and fear, are destructive of prosperity! He that is without exertion never winneth what is great! Therefore, O son, free thyself, by thy own exertions, from these faults that lead to defeat and downfall! Steel thy heart and seek to recover thy own! A man is called *Purusha* because he is competent to trouble his foe (*param.*) He, therefore, who liveth like a woman is misnamed *Purusha* (man). A brave king, of mighty strength, and who moveth like a lion, may go the way of all creatures.* The subjects, however, that reside in his dominions do not yet become unhappy. That king who, disregarding his own happiness and pleasures, seeketh the prosperity of his kingdom, succeedeth soon in gladdening his counsellors and friends?—

“Hearing these words, the son said,—If thou dost not behold me, of what use would the whole Earth be to thee, of what use thy ornaments, of what use all the means of pleasure and even life itself?—The mother said,—Let those regions be obtained by our foes which belong to those that are low.† Let those again that are our friends go to those regions

* *Dishāśbhāvam gatas.*—T.

† The first word of this *sloka* is variously read. Nilakantha notices several readings, but prefers *Kimadyakānām* which he explains as “*Kim adyam*, i. e. *Kim bhoktavyam iti ye chintayanti teshām*, meaning the poor. He also suggests that it may mean, *Kim adya twarayā, qva eva çatrun jeshyāma*, that is, those that are procrastinating. Some of the readings are *Hanyamānasya*, *Anudrutasya*, *Anāhātānām*, *Anādhātānām*, *Nirmanjukānām*, &c.—T.

which are obtainable by persons whose souls are held in respect ! Do not adopt the course of life that is followed by those wretched persons who, destitute of strength and without servants and attendants (to do their bidding) live upon the food supplied by others ! Like the creatures of the earth that depend on the clouds, or the gods depending on Indra, let the Brāhmanas and thy friends all depend on thee for their sustenance ! His life, O Sanjaya, is not vain on whom all creatures depend for their sustenance like birds repairing to a tree abounding with ripe fruits ! The life of that brave man is, indeed, praiseworthy, through whose prowess friends derive happiness, like the gods deriving happiness through the prowess of Cakra ! That man who liveth in greatness, depending on the prowess of his own arms, succeedeth in winning fame in this world and a blessed state in the next !—”

SECTION CXXXIII.

“Vidulā said,—If, having fallen into such a plight, thou wishest to give up manliness, thou shalt then have, in no time, to tread the path that is trod by those that are low and wretched. That Kshatriya who, from desire of life, displayeth not his energy according to the best of his might and prowess, is regarded as a thief ! Alas, like medicine to a dying man, these words that are fraught with grave import, and are proper and reasonable, do not make any impression on thee ! It is true, the king of the Sindhus hath many followers. They are, however, all discontented. From weakness, and ignorance of proper means, they are waiting for the distress of their master (without being able to effect a deliverance for themselves by their own exertions) ! As regards others (his open enemies), they will come to thee with their auxiliaries if they behold thee put forth thy prowess. Uniting with them, seek refuge now in mountain fastnesses, waiting for that season when calamity will overtake the foe, as it must, for he is not free from disease and death ! By name thou art *Sanjaya* (the victorious) ! I do not, however, behold any such indication in thee ! Be true to thy name ! Be *my* son ! Oh, do not make

thy name untrue ! Beholding thee while a child, a Brāhmana of great foresight and wisdom said,—*This one falling into great distress will again win greatness !*—Remembering his words, I hope for thy victory ! It is for that, O son, I tell thee so, and shall tell thee again and again ! That man who pursueth the fruition of his objects according to the ways of policy and for the success of whose objects other people strive cordially, is always sure to win success ! *Whether what I have is gained or lost, I will not desit,*—with such a resolve, O Sanjaya, O learned one, engage in war, without withdrawing thyself from it ! Camvara hath said,—there is not a more miserable state than that in which one is anxious for his food from day to day.* A state such as this hath been said to be more unhappy than the death of one's husband and sons. That which hath been called poverty is only a form of Death. As regards myself, born in a high race, I have been transplanted from one lake into another. Possessed of every auspicious thing, and worshipped by my husband, my power extended over all. Staying in the midst of friends, our friends formerly beheld me decked in costly garlands and ornaments, with body well-washed, attired in excellent robes, and myself always cheerful ! When thou wilt behold both me and thy wife weakened (from want of food), thou wilt then, O Sanjaya, scarcely desire to live ! Of what use will life be to thee when thou wilt behold all our servants engaged in attending on us, our preceptors and our ordinary and extraordinary priests leaving us from want of sustenance ! If, again, I do not now see in thee those laudable and famous achievements in which thou wert formerly engaged, what peace can my heart know ? If I have to say—*Nay*—to a Brāhmana, my heart will burst, for neither myself nor my husband ever said—*Nay*—to a Brāhmana before. We were the refuge of others, without ourselves having ever taken refuge with others ! Having been such, if I have to support life by depending on another, I will surely cast off my life ! Be thou our means of crossing the ocean that is difficult to cross ! In the absence of boats, be

* I render this *Sloka* a little too freely.—T.

thou our boat ! Make for us a place where place there is none.* Resuscitate us that are dead ! Thou art competent to encounter all foes if thou dost not cherish the desire of life ! If, however, thou art for adopting this mode of life that is fit only for a eunuch, then with troubled soul and depressed heart it would be better for thee to sacrifice thy life ! A brave man winneth fame by slaying even a single foe. By slaying Vritra Indra became the great Indra and acquired the sovereignty of all the gods and the cup† for drinking *Soma*, and the lordship of all the worlds. Proclaiming his name in battle, challenging his foes accoutred in steel, and grinding or slaying the foremost warriors of hostile ranks, when a hero winneth far-extending fame in fair fight, his enemies then are pained and bow down unto him. They that are cowards become helpless and contribute by their own conduct to bestow every object of desire on those that are skilled and brave and that fight reckless of their lives. Whether kingdoms be overtaken by mighty ruin, or whether life itself be endangered, they that are noble never desist till they exterminate the foe within their reach. Sovereignty is either the door of heaven or *Amrita*. Regarding it as one of these, and bearing it in mind that it is now shut against thee, fall thou like a burning brand in the midst of thy foes. O king, slay thy foes in battle ! Observe the duties of thy order ! Let me not behold thee cheerless, O enhancer of the fears of thy foes ! Let me not in dejection behold thee standing in misery, surrounded by our sorrowing selves and rejoicing foes ! Rejoice, O son, and make thyself happy in the possession of wealth in the company of the daughters of the *Sauviras* and do not, in weakness of heart, be ruled over by the daughters of the *Saindhavas* ! If a young man like thee, who is possessed of beauty of person, learning, and high birth, and world-wide fame, acteth in such unbecom-

* The Burdwan Pundits have failed to catch the meaning of *Kuru-shwa sthānamasthane*.—T.

† *Graham* is explained by Nilakantha to mean the cup for drinking *Soma*. Some texts read *Prahgraham* which would be tautological, for it means rule or sovereignty.—T.

ing a way like a vicious bull in the matter of bearing its burthen, then that, I think, would be equal to death itself.* What peace can my heart know if I behold thee uttering laudatory speeches in honor of others or walking (submissively) behind them? Oh, never was one born in this race that walked behind another! O son, it behoveth thee not to live as a dependant on another! I know what the eternal essence of Kshatriya virtues† is, as spoken of by the old and the older ones and by those coming late and later still! Eternal and unswerving, it hath been ordained by the Creator himself! He that hath, in this world, been born‡ as a Kshatriya in any high race and hath acquired a knowledge of the duties of that order, will never from fear or for the sake of sustenance,§ bow down to any body on earth. One should stand erect with courage and not bow down, for exertion is manliness! One should rather break in the joints than yield in this world here to anybody! A high-souled Kshatriya should always roam like an infuriate elephant. He should, O Sanjaya, bow down unto Brāhmanas only, for the sake of virtue! He should rule over all other orders, destroying all evil-doers. Possessed of allies or destitute of them, he should be so as long as he liveth!—”

* None of the vernacular translators have correctly rendered this *sloka*. The Burdwan Pundits have narrowly missed the right meaning, while K. P. Singha is, as usual, ludicrously in error. The difficulty lies in *Adhuryyavat-cha Vodavye* which means, as I have rendered, on Nilakantha's authority, "like a vicious bull in the matter of his burthen."—T.

† *Kshatra-hridayam* is not the "Kshatriya heart," but the essence of Kshatriyahood, or Kshatriya virtues or duties. *Purvais* is explained by Nilakantha as "of my own lineage," and *Parais* as "of other families"; whilst *Paratarais*, according to him, means "by the aged." I cannot, however, reject the obvious meanings of these words, even for the sake of Nilakantha. *Avyaya* is literally "indestructible"; here, however, it is used in the sense of unswerving or admitting of no deviation

‡ *Ajatas* is explained by Nilakantha as "well-born."—T.

§ Lit. "Or observing his sustenance," i. e. with an eye to or for the sake of sustenance.—T.

SECTION CXXXIV.

"Kunti said,—Hearing these words of his mother, the son said,—O ruthless and wrathful mother, O thou that thinkest highly of martial heroism, thy heart is surely made of steel beat into that shape ! Fie on Kshatriya practices, in accordance with which thou urgest me to battle as if I were a stranger to thee, and for the sake of which thou speakest to me—thy only son—such words as if thou wert not my mother ! If thou beholdest me not, if thou art dissociated with me—thy son, of what use then would the whole Earth be to thee, of what use all thy ornaments and all the means of enjoyment, indeed, of what use would life itself be to thee ?—

"The mother said,—All the acts* of those that are wise, are (undertaken), O son, for the sake of virtue and profit ! Eyeing these (virtue and profit) only, I urge thee, O Sanjaya, to battle ! The fit hour hath come for exhibiting thy prowess. If at such a time thou dost not resort to action, then disrespected by the people thou wouldst do that which would be most disagreeable to me ! If, O Sanjaya, thou art about to be stained with infamy and I do not (from affection) tell thee anything, then that affection, worthless and unreasonable, would be like the she-ass's for her young. Do not tread the path that is disapproved by the wise and adopted by the foolish. Great is the ignorance here. Innumerable creatures of the world have taken refuge in it. If thou, however, adoptest the behaviour of the wise, thou wilt then be dear to me † Indeed, if thou

* For *Sarvārambhā* some texts read *Sarvāvasthā*. The sense would not be so clear if this reading were adopted.—T.

† *Avidyā* is ignorance, or non-knowledge, used in reference to the belief cherished by many that this body is the Self or Soul. Knowledge consists in believing the body to be material and destructible and separate from the Soul or Self. They who believe the body to be Self cannot cast it off for the benefit of the Soul. What the mother says to her son is,—Do not be one of these ! On the other hand, be wise or adopt the behaviour of the wise, i. e. do not endanger thy soul for the sake of thy body, but throw away thy body, if necessary, for the sake of thy soul. A Kshatriya's soul should be noble, fearless, &c., as said before.—T.

hast recourse to virtue and profit, if with God above thou reliest upon human exertion, if thy conduct becometh like that of the good, then it is by this and not by any other means that thou wilt become dear to me !* He that taketh delight in sons and grandsons that are well-instructed, (enjoyeth a delight that is real). He, on the other hand, that taketh delight in a son who is destitute of exertion, refractory, and wicked-minded, hath not the very object accomplished for which a son is desired.† Those worst of men that never do what is proper and always do what is censurable, do not obtain happiness here or hereafter ! A Kshatriya, O Sanjaya, hath been created for battle and victory ! Whether he winneth or perisheth, he obtaineth the region of Indra ! The happiness that a Kshatriya obtaineth by reducing his foes‡ to subjection is such that the like of it doth not exist in heaven in the sacred region of Indra ! Burning with wrath, a Kshatriya of great energy, if vanquished many times, should wait desiring to vanquish his foes.§ Without either casting away his own life or slaying his foes, how can he obtain peace of mind by any other course ? He that is possessed of wisdom regardeth§ anything little as disagreeable. Unto that person to whom anything little becometh agreeable, that little (ultimately) becometh a source of pain. The man that hath not what is desirable soon becometh wretched. Indeed, he soon feeleth every want and is lost like the Gāṅgā on entering the ocean.—'

* "The son said,—Thou shouldst not, O mother, give ex-

* The 10th *śloka* is grammatically connected with the 9th. I have rendered it some what freely.—T.

† There seems to be some omission in the 11th *śloka*. Grammatically it is connected with the first half of the following *śloka*. The sense is scarcely clear. For *Yohyevasuvinitena* some texts read incorrectly *Yohyevamavinitena*. It seems to me that *Suvinitena* is used by way of contrast with *Durvinitena* that follows.—T.

‡ Many texts read *Yadi-mitrān*. I think this is erroneous. The correct reading, I apprehend, is *yadamitrān*.—T.

§ Nilakantha supposes that *Śhātavyam* should be supplied after *Jigishayā*. I have, therefore, detached 25 from 26.—T.

§ *Ichati* is explained by Nilakantha to mean *manyate*.—T.

pression to such views before thy son ! Show him kindness now, staying by his side like a silent and dumb being !

* The mother said,—Great is my gratification since thou sayest so ! I who may be urged (by thee to what is my duty) am thus urged by thee ! I shall, therefore, urge thee more (for doing what thou shouldst do) !* I will, indeed, honor thee then when I will behold thee crowned with complete success after the slaughter of all the Saindhavas !—

“The son said,—Without wealth, without allies, how can success and victory be mine ? Conscious of this exceedingly miserable state of mine, I have myself abstained from desire of kingdom like an evil-doer abstaining from desire of heaven ! If, therefore, O thou of mature wisdom, thou seest any means (by which all this can be effected), speak fully of it to me as I ask thee, for I shall do all that thou mayst command me to do !—

“The mother said,—Do not disgrace thy soul, O son, by anticipations of failure ! Objects unattained have been attained ; while those attained have been lost ! The accomplishment of objects should never be sought with wrath and folly. In all acts, O son, the attainment of success is always uncertain. Knowing that success is uncertain, people still act, so that they sometimes succeed, and sometimes do not. They, however, that abstain from action, never obtain success. In the absence of exertion there is but one result, *viz*, the absence of success. There are, however, two results in the case of exertion, *viz*, the acquisition of success or its non-acquisition. He, O prince, who hath settled before-hand that all acts are uncertain in respect of their results, maketh both success and prosperity† unattainable by himself. *This will be,—wi*

* The plain meaning of this is,—“I am glad to see thee thus urging me to do my duty, *viz*, showing thee compassion. But as thou urgest me to do what thou thinkest to be my duty, suffer me to urge thee also to do what thou shouldst do !”—T.

† Nilakantha explains that *Vridhi* here means sickness or affliction, *i. e.* one's own ; and *Samridhi* is prosperity—of the foe. There is a root *Vridh* which does mean to pain or afflict, but there is no necessity of rejecting here the obvious and plain meaning of the word,—T.

such a belief should one, casting off all sloth, exert and wake up and address himself to every act. That wise king who, O son, engageth in acts, having performed all auspicious rites and with the gods and the Brāhmanas on his side, soon winneth success.* Like the Sun embracing the East, the goddess of prosperity embraceth him. I see thou hast shown thyself fit for the various suggestions and means and encouraging speeches thou hast had from me! Display (now) thy prowess! It behoveth thee to win, by every exertion, the object thou hast in view! Bring together to thy own side those that are angry (with thy foes), those that are covetous, those that have been weakened (by thy foes), those that are jealous (of thy foes), those that have been humiliated (by them), those that always challenge (them) from excess of pride, and all others of this class! By this means thou wilt be able to break the mighty host (of thy enemy) like an impetuous and fierce-rising tempest scattering the clouds! Give them (thy would-be allies) wealth before it is due, seek their good, be up and doing, and speak sweetly unto them all! They will then do thee good, and place thee at their head! When the enemy cometh to know that his foe hath become reckless of his life, then is he troubled on the latter's account as from a snake living in his chamber! If, knowing one to be powerful, one's enemy doth not strive to subjugate one, he should at least make one friendly by the application of the arts of conciliation, gift, and the like. Even that would be tantamount to subjugation. Obtaining a respite by means of the art of conciliation, one's wealth may increase. And if one's wealth increaseth, one is worshipped and sought as a refuge by one's friends. If again one is deprived of wealth, one is abandoned by friends and relatives, and (more than that) mistrusted and even despised by them! It is perfectly impossible for him to ever regain his kingdom, who, having united himself with his foe, liveth confidently.† "

* The word used is *Vridhi* which literally means increase or growth.

† *Sambhavyate* is supposed by Nilakantha to be used here ironically.

SECTION CXXXV.

“The mother said,—Into whatever calamity a king may fall, he should never give way to fear. Even if his heart were to burst with fear, he should not still betray it.* Beholding the king afflicted with fright, the whole kingdom, the army, the counsellors, all yield to fear, and all the subjects become disunited.† Some go and embrace the side of the enemy; others simply abandon (the king); and others again, that had before been humiliated, strive to strike. They, however, that are intimate friends wait by his side, and though desiring his welfare yet from inability (to do anything) wait helplessly like a cow whose calf hath been tethered. As friends grieve for friends that are plunged into distress, so those well-wishers also grieve upon beholding their lord plunged into grief.‡ Even thou hast many friends whom thou hadst worshipped before. Even thou hast many friends after thy heart, who feel for thy kingdom and who desire to take a share of thy calamities on themselves. Do not frighten those friends, and do not suffer them to abandon thee on beholding thee afflicted with fear! Desiring to test thy might, manliness, and understanding, and wishing also to encourage thee, I have said all this for enhancing thy energy! If thou understandest what I have said, and if all I have said appears proper and sufficient, then, O Sanjaya, muster thy patience and gird up thy loins for victory! We have a large number of treasure-houses unknown to thee. I alone know of their existence, and no other person. I will place all these at thy disposal. Thou hast also, O Sanjaya, more than one friend who sympathise with thee in thy joys and woes, and who, O hero, never retreat from the field of battle! O grinder of foes, allies such as these always play the part of faithful counsellors to a person

* Literally, “should not behave as if afflicted with fear.”—T.

† Nilakantha explains *mahim* to be *mahisthan lokan*.—T.

‡ Kali Prosunno Singha has made a mess of this and the preceding *śloka*. The Burdwan Pundits give the sense correctly.—T.

who seeketh his own welfare and desireth to acquire what is agreeable to himself!—'

"Kunti continued,—'Hearing this speech of his mother fraught with excellent letters, words, and sense, the despair that had overtaken Sanjaya's heart left it instantly although that prince was not gifted with great intelligence. And the son said,—When I have thee that art so observant of my future welfare for my guide, I shall certainly either rescue my paternal kingdom that is sunk in water or perish (in the attempt)! During thy discourse I was almost a silent listener. Now and then only I interposed a word. It was, however, only with the view of drawing thee out so that I might hear more on the subject! I have not been satiated with thy words like a person not satiated with drinking *amrita*. Deriving support from my allies, behold, I gird up my loins for repressing my foes and obtaining victory! *—'

"Kunti continued,—'Pierced by the wordy arrows of his mother, the son roused himself like a steed of proud mettle and achieved all that his mother had pointed out. When a king is afflicted by foes and overcome with despair, his minister should make him hear this excellent history that enhanceth energy and inspireth might. Indeed, this history is called *Jaya* and should be listened to by every one desirous of victory. Indeed, having listened to it, one may soon subjugate the whole earth and grind his foes. This history causeth a woman to bring forth a son. Capable also of causing a woman to bring forth a heroic son, the woman quick with child that listeneth to it repeatedly, certainly giveth birth to a hero. The Kshatriya woman that listeneth to it bringeth forth a brave son of unbaffled prowess, one that is foremost in learning, foremost in ascetic austerities, foremost in liberality, devoted to asceticism, blazing forth with Brāhmī beauty, numberable with the good, radiant with effulgence, endued with great might, blessed, a mighty car-warrior, possessed of great in-

* These three *ślokas*, representing Sanjaya's speech, I have rendered somewhat freely, as a closely literal version would not give the true spirit of the original.—T.

telligence, irresistible (in battle), ever victorious, invincible, a chastiser of the wicked, and a protector of all practisers of virtue ! ”

SECTION CXXXVI.

“Kunti said,—‘Say unto Arjuna, O Keçava, these words :—When thou wert brought forth in the lying-in room and when I was sitting in the hermitage surrounded by ladies, a celestial and delightful voice was heard in the skies, saying,—*O Kunti, this thy son will rival the deity of a thousand eyes ! This one will vanquish in battle all the assembled Kurus ! Aided by Bhima,* he will conquer the whole Earth and his fame will touch the very heavens ! With Vāsudeva as his ally, he will slay the Kurus in battle and recover his lost paternal share in the kingdom ! Endued with great prosperity, he will, with his brothers, perform three great sacrifices !—O thou of unfading glory, thou knowest how steady in truth is Vibhatshu otherwise called Savyasāchin, how irresistible he is ! O thou of Daçārha’s race, let it be as that (celestial) voice said ! If, O thou of Vrishni’s race, there is anything like righteousness, those words will be true, for then, O Krishna, thou wilt thyself accomplish it all ! I do not doubt what that voice said ! I bow to righteousness which is superior to all. It is righteousness that supports all creatures ! Thou shalt say these words unto Dhananjaya ! Unto Vrikodara again, who is always ready for exertion, thou shalt say these words :—*The time hath come for that in view of which a Kshatriya lady bringeth forth a son ! They that are foremost among men never become cheerless when they have hostilities to wage !†—Thou knowest what the state of Bhima’s mind is ! That grinder of foes is never pacified until he exterminates his foes ! Thou shalt, O Mādhava, next say unto the auspicious Krishna,**

* Literally, “having Bhima for his second.” *Udvartayishyati* is explained by Nilakantha as *Akulikarishyati*. It would, therefore, mean “trouble, annoy, or persecute.”—T.

† Literally, “having obtained hostility.”—T.

of great fame, that daughter-in-law of the high-souled Pāndu, who is conversant with the details of every virtue, these words :—*O thou that art highly blessed, O thou of noble parentage, O thou that art endued with great fame, that becoming behaviour which thou always showest towards my sons is, indeed, worthy of thee !*—Thou must also say unto the two sons of Mādri who are always devoted to Kshatriya virtues, these words :—*Covet ye, more than life itself, those enjoyments that are acquired by prowess ! Objects won by prowess always please the heart of a person that liveth according to Kshatriya practices !** Engaged as ye are in acquiring every kind of virtue, before your very eyes the princess of Pāṇchāla was addressed in cruel and abusive epithets ! Who is there that can forgive that insult ? The deprivation of their kingdom grieved me not. Their defeat at dice grieved me not. The very exile of my sons (into the woods) grieved me not. That the noble and fair Draupadi however, while weeping in the midst of the assembly, had to hear those cruel and insulting words is what grieveth me exceedingly ! Alas, the exceedingly beautiful Krishnā, ever devoted to Kshatriya virtues, found no protector on that occasion though she was wedded to such powerful protectors ! O thou of mighty arms, say unto that tiger among men, Arjuna, that foremost of all wielders of weapons, that he should always tread in the path that may be pointed out by Draupadi ! Thou knowest it very well, O Keçava, that Bhima and Arjuna,—that pair of fierce and all-destroying Yamas,—are capable of making the very gods go the way of all creatures !† Is not this an insult to them that (their wife) Krishnā was dragged into the assembly ? O Keçava, recall to their remembrance all those cruel and harsh words that Dusçāsana said unto Bhima in the very presence of all the warriors of Kuru's race ! Enquire (in my name) after the welfare of the Pandavas with their child-

* The word *Purushottama* in this *sloka*, in the case of address, refers to Krishna whom Kunti is addressing. This remark, therefore, seems to be addressed to Krishna, for being repeated to the sons of Mādri.—T.

† I. e. "may slay the very gods."—T.

ren and Krishnā! Say unto them, O Janārdhana, that I am well! Go thou on thy auspicious way, and protect my sons!"

Vaiçampāyana continued.—"Saluting and walking round her, the mighty-armed Krishna whose gait resembled the sportive gait of the lion, then issued out of Prithā's abode. And he then dismissed those bulls among the Kurus with Bhishma at their head (who had followed him), and taking Karna upon his chariot, left (the Kuru city), accompanied by Sātyaki. And after he of Daçārha's race had departed, the Kurus assembled together and began to talk of that highly wonderful and marvellous incident connected with him.* And they said,—'Overcome with ignorance, the whole Earth hath been entangled in the meshes of death!' And they also said,—'Through Duryodhana's folly, all this is doomed to destruction!'

"Having issued out of the (Kuru) city, that foremost of persons proceeded, deliberating with Karna for a long time. And that delighter of all the Yādavas then dismissed Karna and urged his steeds to greater speed. And driven by Dāraka, those swift coursers endued with the speed of the tempest or the mind, went on as if drinking the skies. And quickly traversing a long way like fleet hawks, they reached Upaplavya very soon, bearing the wielder of *Cārngā*."

SECTION CXXXVII.

Vaiçampāyana said.—"Hearing the words of Kuntī, those mighty car-warriors, Bhishma and Drona, then spoke these words unto the disobedient Duryodhana.—'Hast thou, O tiger among men, heard the fierce words of grave import, excellent and consistent with virtue, that Kuntī spoke in the presence of Krishna? Her sons will act according to them, especially as they are approved by Vāsudeva! O Kaurava, they will not assuredly desist, without their share of the kingdom (being given them)! Thou hast inflicted much pain on the sons of Prithā. And Draupadi also was afflicted by thee in the assem-

* *Viz*, his universal form, which he had displayed at the Kuru assembly for terrifying Duryodhana and his counsellors.—T.

bly ! They were, however, bound then by the bonds of virtue, and it was for this that they tolerated that treatment. Obtaining Arjuna now, who is skilled in every weapon, and Bhima of firm resolution, and *Gāndiva* and the couple of (inexhaustible) quivers, and that car (of Arjuna), and that banner (bearing the device of the ape), and Nakula and Sahadeva both endued with great might and energy, and Vāsudeva also, as his allies, Yudhishtira will not forgive (thee) ! O mighty-armed one, thou hast witnessed with thy own eyes. how the intelligent Arjuna vanquished us all in battle before, in the city of Virāta ! Indeed, after this, that ape-bannered (warrior) consumed in battle, taking up his fierce weapons, those *Dānavas* of terrible deeds (called) the *Nivātakavachas*. On the occasion also of the tale of cattle, (when captured by the *Gandharvas*) this Karna and all these (thy counsellors) and thyself accoutred in mail and on thy car, were all liberated (from the grasp of the *Gandharvas*) by that Arjuna ! That is a sufficient proof. Therefore, O foremost of the Bharatas, with all thy brothers make peace with the sons of Pāndu ! Save this whole Earth that is within Destruction's jaws ! Yudhishtira is thy elder brother, virtuous in behaviour, affectionate (towards thee), sweet-speeched, and learned ! Abandoning thy sinful intentions, unite thyself with that tiger among men ! If Pāndu's son beholdeth thee divested of thy bow, and without the wrinkles (of rage) on thy brow, and cheerful, even that would be for the good of our race ! Approaching with all thy counsellors that prince, embrace him (fraternally) ! O represser of foes, salute the king respectfully as before. And let Yudhishtira the son of Kunti, the elder brother of Bhima, seize, from affection, thy saluting self with his arms ! And let that foremost of smiters, Bhima, possessed of leonine shoulders and thighs and round, long, and mighty arms, embrace thee ! And then let that son of Kunti, Dhananjaya, called also Pārtha, of eyes like lotus petals, and curly hair* and conch-like neck

* The word is *Gudakeṣa* which is explained by some commentators as the *Iṣa* or lord of *Gudaka* or sleep. Nilakantha, however, throws doubt on this etymology and suggests, that it probably means 'curly

salute thee respectfully ! Then let those tigers among men, the twin Aṣwins, unrivalled on earth for beauty, wait on thee with affection and reverence as on their preceptor ! And let all the kings with him of Daçārha's race at their head, shed tears of joy ! Abandoning thy pride, unite thyself with thy brothers ! Rule thou the whole Earth, with thy brothers ! Let all the kings joyfully return (to their respective homes), having embraced one another ! There is no need of battle, O king of kings ! Listen to the dissuasions of thy friends ! In the battle (that will ensue) a great destruction of the Kshatriyas is certainly indicated ! The stars are all hostile. The animals and birds have all assumed fearful aspects ! Diverse portents, O hero, are visible, all indicating a slaughter of Kshatriyas ! All these portents again are particularly visible in our abodes ! Blazing meteors are afflicting* thy host. Our animals are all cheerless and seem, O king, to be crying ! Vultures are wheeling around thy troops ! Neither the city nor the palace looks as before ! Jackals, setting forth ominous yells, are running about the four quarters which are ablaze with conflagrations ! Obey thou the counsels of thy father and mother as also of ourselves who are thy well-wishers ! War and peace, O thou of mighty arms, are within thy control ! If, O grinder of foes, thou dost not act according to the words of thy friends, thou shalt have to repent upon beholding thy army afflicted with the arrows of Pārtha ! Hearing in battle the terrible yells uttered by the mighty Bhima and the twang of *Gandiva*, thou wilt remember these our words ! Indeed, if what we say appears unacceptable to thee, then it will be as we say ! "†

haired." I am disposed to adopt this meaning. The next word is *Kamou-griva* which means "conch-necked," i. e. one whose neck has three wrinkles like to the wrinkles of a conch-shell.—T.

* Literally, impeding or obstructing.—T.

† *Cushmin* is explained by Nilakantha to mean mighty or strong. The second half of the last *śloka* is not very clear. Kāli Prasanna Singha, as he always does in such cases, omits it altogether. I have rendered it freely, and find that I am supported by the Burdwan Pundits.

SECTION. CXXXVIII.

Vaiçampāyana said.—“Thus addressed (by them), Duryodhana, contracting the space between his eye-brows, became cheerless, and with face bent down began to cast oblique glances. And he said not a word in reply. Beholding him cheerless, those bulls among men, Bhishma and Drona, looking at each other, once more addressed him, and said (these words).

“Bhishma said,—‘What can be a matter of greater grief to us than that we shall have to fight against that Yudhishthira who is devoted to the service of his superiors, destitute of envy, conversant with *Brahma*, and truthful in speech!’

“Drona said,—‘My affection for Dhananjaya is greater than that which I bear for my son Açwatthāman! There is greater reverence also and humility (towards me) in that ape-bannered hero (than in Açwathāman)! Alas, in observance of Kshatriya duties, I shall have to fight even against that Dhananjaya, who is dearer to me than my son! Fie on the Kshatriya, profession! That Vibhatsu who hath no other bowman in the world as his equal, hath, through my grace, acquired this superiority over all bowmen! He that hateth his friends, he that is of wicked disposition, he that denieth godhead, he that is crooked and deceitful, never obtaineth the worship of the righteous, like an ignorant person present at a sacrifice! Though dissuaded from sin, a sinful man would still wish to commit sinful acts; while he that is righteous, though tempted by sin, would not yet abandon righteousness! Though thou hast conducted thyself with falsehood and deceit towards them, the Pāndavas are still desirous of doing what is agreeable to thee! As regards thyself, O thou best of the Bharatas, all thy faults are calculated to bring about disasters on thee!

The meaning depends in a large measure on the single word *Bhaviṣyati*. Rendered closely, the words are, “If this my word appear contrary to thee, (then) it will be!” The singular genitive personal pronoun occurring twice in this *śloka* is a mistake. The speakers are Bhishma and Drona, and, therefore, the plural (or dual) form ought to have been used.—T

Thou hast been addressed by the eldest of the Kurus, by me, by Vidura, and by Vāsudeva! Thou dost not yet understand what is beneficial for thyself! *I have a large force*,—with this conviction thou desirest to pierce the Pāṇḍava host abounding with heroes, like the current of the Gangā piercing the ocean abounding with sharks and alligators and *makaras*! * Having obtained Yudhishtira's prosperity like the cast off robes or garlands of another, thou regardest it as thy own! If the son of Prithā and Pāṇḍu stayeth even in the woods with Draupadi and surrounded by his armed brothers, who is there, in even the possession of a kingdom, that is competent to vanquish him! In the presence of even that Ailavila (Kuvera) under whose command all the *Yakshas* live as servants, Yudhishtira the just shoné with splendour! † Having proceeded to Kuvera's abode and having procured wealth therefrom, the Pāṇḍavas are now desirous of attacking thy swelling kingdom and winning sovereignty for themselves! (As regards us two), we have made gifts, poured libations on fire, studied (the scriptures), and gratified the Brāhmanas by presents of wealth. The (allotted) periods of our life have also run out. Know that our work has been done. (As regards thyself however), giving up happiness, kingdom, friends, and wealth, great will be thy calamity if thou seekest war with the Pāṇḍavas! How canst thou vanquish the son of Pāṇḍu when

* Some texts read *ivoshnaga* for *ivārnavam*. The meaning would then be unquestionably better; *ushnaga* is "in the season of rains." The sense, if this reading be adopted, would be, 'Thou desirest to cross (the Pāṇḍava army like) the current of the Gangā during the rainy season!' Of course, the correction *vegamiṇa* must have to be made for *vega iva*.—T.

† *Rājānus*, the plural of *Rājān*, means here the *Yakshas* or followers of Kuvera the lord of treasures, the friend of Civa, the elder brother of Rāvana. Kuvera, therefore, is sometimes called *Rājājeṣvara* or the king of kings. The sense of the passage is that when Yudhishtira went to Kuvera's abode, he shone there more brilliantly than the lord of treasures himself having all the *Yakshas* under his control. The Burdwan Pundits explain the *śloka* correctly. Kāli Prasanna Singha, as usual, trips.—T.

Draupadi who is truthful in speech and devoted to rigid vows and austerities, prayeth for his success? How wilt thou vanquish that son of Pāndu who hath Janārdhana for his counsellor, and who hath for a brother that Dhananjaya who is the foremost of wielders of weapons? How wilt thou vanquish that son of Pāndu, of severe austerities, who hath for his allies so many Brāhmanas endued with intelligence and mastery over their senses? In accordance with what a prosperity-wishing friend should do when he sees his friends sinking in an ocean of distress, I again tell thee, there is no necessity for war! Make peace with those heroes for the sake of prosperity to the Kurus! Do not court defeat, with thy sons, counsellors, and army!"

SECTION CXXXIX.

"Dhritarāshtra said,—'O Sanjaya, in the midst of all the princes and the servants, the slayer of Madhu took Karna upon his car and went out (of our city)! What did that slayer of hostile heroes, that one of immeasurable soul, say unto Rādhā's son? What conciliatory words did Govinda speak unto the *Suta's* son? Tell me, O Sanjaya, what those words were, mild or fierce, that Krishna possessed of a voice deep as that of newly-risen clouds during the rainy season said unto Karna?"

"Sanjaya said,—'Listen to me, O Bhārata, as I repeat in due order those words, fierce and mild, agreeable and consistent with virtue, true and beneficial, and pleasing to the heart, which the slayer of Madhu, of immeasurable soul, said unto Rādhā's son!'"

* The speakers in this Section are, I suspect, wrongly named. What Krishna said unto Karna was all a secret. It was known to Krishna and Karna only, and not to anybody else before the battle, for Krishna here first disclosed to Karna the secret of his birth, and Karna, although he seems to have been aware of it, urged Krishna not to divulge it to Yudhishtira as that, he thought, would prevent Yudhishtira from fighting. How could Krishna's words, therefore, be known to Sanjaya

“Vāsudeva said,—O son of Rādhā, thou hast worshipped many Brāhmanas fully conversant with the *Vedas*. With concentrated attention and mind free from envy thou hast also (on many an occasion) enquired of them after truth! Thou knowest, therefore, O Karna, what the eternal sayings of the *Vedas* are! Thou art also well-versed in all the subtile conclusions of the scriptures! It is said by those conversant with the scriptures that the two kinds of sons called *Kānina* and *Sahoda* that are born of a maiden have him for their father who weddeth the maiden.* Thou, O Karna, hast been born in this way. Thou art, therefore, morally the son of Pāndu! Come, be a king, according to the injunction of the scriptures!† On the side of thy father, thou hast the sons of Prithā, on the side of thy mother, thou hast the Vrishnis, (for thy kinsmen). O bull among men, know that thou hast these two for thy own! Proceeding this very day with me hence, O sire, let the Pāndavas know thee as a son of Kunti born before Yudhishtira! Thy brothers the five Pāndavas, the sons of Draupadi, and the invincible son of Sūbhadrā, will all embrace thy feet! All the kings and princes again that have been assembled for the Pāndava cause, and all the Andhakas and Vrishnis, will also embrace thy feet! Let queens and princesses

at this stage of the story? The omniscience of Sanjaya in consequence of which he knew everything about the battle that subsequently took place, was due to a boon of Vyasa. That boon was bestowed upon him sometime after Krishna's departure from Hastinā. I suspect, the real speakers in this dialogue are Vaiṣampāyana and Janamejaya. Substitute Janamejaya for Dhritarāshtra and Vaiṣampāyana for Sanjaya, and the anomaly noticed would disappear. All the printed and manuscript texts, however, have Dhritarāshtra and Sanjaya as the speakers. I have not, therefore, ventured to make the correction, although I am almost certain that the correction should be made.—T.

* A *Kānina* child is one born of a maiden before her marriage. A *Sahoda* is one begotten on a maiden by somebody but born after the maiden's marriage with some one else. *Vide* the different kinds of sons enumerated in the *Adi Parva*, P. 352.—T.

† *Nigrahāt*, the ablative of *Nigraha*, means *Cāsana*, i. e. dictate, injunction, &c. Kali Prasanna Singha misunderstands the word totally, and gives a ridiculous version of the passage.—T.

bring golden and silver and earthen jars (full of water) and deciduous herbs and all kinds of seeds and gems, and creepers, for thy installation !* During the sixth period, Draupadi also will come to thee (as a wife). Let that best of Brāhmanas, Dhaumya, of restrained soul, pour libations of clarified butter on the (sacred) fire, and let those Brāhmanas regarding all the four *Vedas* as authoritative (and who are acting as priests unto the Pāṇdavas) perform the ceremony of thy installation † Let the family priest of the Pāṇdavas who is devoted to *Vedic* rites, and those bulls among men—those brothers the five sons of Pāṇdu,—and the five sons of Draupadi, and the Pāṇchālas, and the Chedis, and myself also, install thee as the lord of the whole Earth ! Let Dharma's son Yudhishtira, of righteous soul and rigid vows, be thy heir-presumptive, ruling the kingdom under thee ! Holding the white *chāmara* in his hand (for fanning thee), let Yudhishtira the son of Kunti ride on the same car behind thee ! After thy installation is over, let that other son of Kunti, the mighty Bhimasena, hold the white umbrella over thy head ! Indeed, Arjuna then will drive thy car furnished with a hundred tinkling bells, its sides covered with tiger skins, and with white steeds harnessed to it ! Then Nakula and Sahadeva, and the five sons of Draupadi, and the Pāṇchālas with that mighty car-warrior Cikhandi, will all proceed behind thee ! I myself with all the Andhakas and the Vrishnis, will walk behind thee ! Indeed, all the

* All these ingredients are used in ceremonies of installation to this day. When again the images of deities are bathed, these very articles are used. They are all placed in jars of water, and with proper *mantras* the water is poured over the head of the person to be installed or over the stone images of gods and goddesses to be vivified for worship. The word which I have rendered 'deciduous herbs' is *oshadhyas* (plural of *oshadhi*.) To this day the *Bunyas* of Indian bazzars sell certain articles under the name of *Sarvaushadhi Mahaushadhi*. I do not know what these are, but have seen them used in many ceremonial rites.—T.

† *Chāturvaidyas Brāhmanās* are those that regard all the four *Vedas* as authoritative. There are others that are *Trivedis*, and others *Dwi-vedis*, and others *Ekavedis*, and others again as *Anrichs*. Vide *Sanat-sujātiya* sections, P. 145.—T.

Dāçārhas and the Daçārnas, will, O king, be numbered with thy relatives! Enjoy the sovereignty of the Earth, O thou of mighty arms, with thy brothers the Pāndavas, with *Yapas* and *homas* and auspicious rites of diverse kinds performed in thy honor! Let the Dravidas, with the Kuntalas, the Āndhras, and the Tālacharas, and let also the Chuchupās, and the Venupas, all walk before thee!* Let chaunters and panegyrists praise thee with innumerable laudatory hymns! Let the Pāndavas proclaim—*Victory to Vasusena*!† Surrounded by the Pāndavas, like the moon by the stars, rule thou the kingdom, O son of Kunti, and galden Kunti herself! Let thy friends rejoice, and thy enemies grieve! Let there be, this very day, a brotherly union between thee and thy brothers the sons of Pāndu!—”

SECTION CXL.

“Karna said,—Without doubt, O Keçava, thou hast said these words from thy love, affection, and friendship for me, as also in consequence of thy desire of doing me good, O thou of Vrishni's race! I know all that thou hast said unto me! Morally I am the son of Pāndu, as also in consequence of the injunctions of the scriptures, as thou, O Krishna, thinkest! My mother, while a maiden, bore me in her womb, O Janārdhana, through her connection with *Surya*! And at the command of *Surya* himself, she abandoned me as soon as I was born! Even thus, O Krishna, I came into the world! Morally, therefore, I am the son of Pāndu. Kunti, however, abandoned me without thinking of my welfare! The *Suta* Adhiratha, as soon as he beheld me, took me to his home,

* The sense is,—“Let these move and act in obedience to thee, and having thee for their commander walking behind them!”—T.

† Vasusena is another name of Karna. In fact, that was his first name. He came to be called *Karna* in consequence of his having cut off with a weapon his natural coat of mail for giving it away to Indra who had begged it of him as alms. He is frequently also called *Rādheya* owing to his having been brought up by Rādhā the wife of the *Suta* king Adhiratha. As the adopted son of the latter, Karna is sometimes called also Adhirathi.—T.

and gave me, O slayer of Madhu, unto (his wife) Rādhā from affection. From her affection for me, Rādhā's breasts were filled with milk that very day, and she, O Mādhava, held my urine and evacuations. How can one like us, conversant with duties and ever engaged in listening to scripture, deprive her of her *Pinda*?* So also Adhiratha of the *Suta* class regardeth me as a son, and I too, from affection, always regard him as (my) father! O Mādhava, that Adhiratha, O Janārdhana, from parental affection caused all the rites of infancy† to be performed on my person, according to the rules prescribed in the scriptures. It is that Adhiratha again who caused the name Vasusena to be bestowed upon me by the Brāhmanas.‡ When also I attained to youth, I married wives according to his selection. Through them have been born my sons and grandsons, O Janārdhana! My heart also, O Krishna, and all the bonds of affection and love, are fixed on them! From joy or fear, O Govinda, I cannot venture to destroy those bonds even for the sake of the whole Earth or of heaps of gold! In consequence also of my connection with Duryodhana of Dhritarāshtra's race, I have, O Krishna, enjoyed

* The cake or ball of rice offered to one's deceased ancestors. Karna, as Rādhā's child, or as one brought up by that lady, was bound to offer her the *Pinda* after her death. The obligation of offering the *pinda* is still a sacred one. The Hindu law of inheritance, to this day, more or less in all the different schools, depends very materially on the doctrine of the *pinda*. Generally speaking, the giver of the *pinda* takes the inheritance.—T.

† These are many and various, beginning with the cutting off of the navel string.—T.

‡ Personal nomenclology is not arbitrary in India among the Hindus. To this day it is the family priest, who must be a little of an astrologer, that casts the nativity of every new-born child, and bestows a name, according to certain well-known rules, on the infant in view of the constellations under which the birth takes place. Over this name, called the *Rāṇi* name, the bearer has no control, although, sometimes, a different name is also bestowed for purposes of worldly intercourse, by parents and friends according to their own fancy. Marriages, sacred investitures, *grādhas*, and other religious rites must be performed in the *Rāṇi* name. *Rāṇi* is the Sanskrit word for a sign of the Ecliptic.—T.

sovereignty for thirteen years, without a thorn in my side ! I have performed many sacrifices, always however in connection with persons of the *Suta* tribe ! All my family rites and marriage rites have been performed in connection with *Sutas*. Obtaining me, O Krishna, Duryodhana hath, O thou of Vrishni's race, made these preparations for an armed encounter and provoked hostilities with the sons of Pāndu ! And it is for this, O *Achyuta*, that in the battle (that will ensue) I, O Krishna, have been chosen as the great antagonist of Arjuna to advance against him in single combat ! For the sake of death, or the ties of blood, or fear, or temptation, I cannot venture, O Janārdhana, to behave falsely towards the intelligent son of Dhritarāshtra. If I do not now engage in a single combat with Arjuna, this will, O Hrishikeṣa, be inglorious for both myself and Pārtha ! Without doubt, O slayer of Madhu, thou hast told me all this for doing me good ! The Pāndavas also, obedient as they are to thee, will, without doubt, do all that thou hast said ! Thou must, however, conceal this our discourse for the present, O slayer of Madhu ! Therein lies our benefit, I think, O delighter of all the Yādavas ! If king Yudhishtira of virtuous soul and well-controlled senses cometh to know me as the first-born son of Kunti, he will never accept the kingdom ! If again, O slayer of Madhu, this mighty and swelling empire becometh mine, I shall, O represser of foes, certainly make it over to Duryodhana only ! Let Yudhishtira of virtuous soul become king for ever ! He that hath Hrishikeṣa for his guide, and Dhananjaya and that mighty car-warrior Bhima for his combatants, as also Nakula and Sahadeva and the sons of Draupadi, is fit, O Mādhava, to rule over the whole Earth ! Dhristadyumna the prince of the Pāñchālas, that mighty car-warrior Sātyaki, Uttamaujas, Yudhāmanyu the prince of the Somakas who is devoted to truth, the ruler of the Chedis, Chekitāna, the invincible Cikhandi, the Kekaya brothers all of the hue of *Indragopaka* insects,* Bhima-

* These insects appear in the rainy season, and are of a peculiar red hue. They belong to the *Coccinella* genus.—T.

sena's uncle Kuntibhoja of high soul and possessed of steeds endued with the colors of the rainbow, the mighty car-warrior Cyenajit, Cankha the son of Virāta, and thyself, O Janārdana, like an ocean,*—great is this assemblage, O Krishna, of Kshatriyas (that hath been made of Yudhishtira)! This blazing kingdom, celebrated among all the kings of the earth, is already won (by Yudhishtira) † O thou of Vrishni's race, a great Sacrifice of arms is about to be celebrated by Dhritarāshtra's son! Thou, O Janārdana, wilt be the *Upadrashtri* of that sacrifice. The office of *Adhyaryu* ‡ also, O Krishna, in that sacrifice, will be thine! The ape-bannered Vibhatsua accoutred in mail will be the *Hotri* § (His bow) *Gāndivā* will be the sacrificial laddle, and the prowess of the warriors will be the clarified butter (that is to be consumed). The weapons called *Aindra*, *Pāṇupata*, *Brāhma*, and *Sthunākarna*, applied by Arjuna, will, O Mādhava, be the *mantras* (of that sacrifice). Resembling his father, or, perhaps, excelling him in prowess, Subhadra's son (Abhimanyu) will be the chief *Vedic* hymn to be chaunted. ¶ That destroyer of elephant ranks, that utterer

* Nilakantha explains that this means *Nidhiriva akshayas Kāmapurakas*, i. e. inexhaustible like the ocean and the grantor of every wish.—T.

† The Burdwan Pundits interpret this *śloka* differently. They think that it refers to Duryodhana and is connected with what follows, and accordingly they render.—“It is true, Duryodhana hath obtained this blazing kingdom &c., &c., but a great Sacrifice &c., &c. will yet take place!”—T.

‡ *Upadrashtri* is he who overlooks and instructs all the priests employed in the sacrifice and assigns to them their duties. He takes the supreme direction in his hands. The *upadrashtri* is emblematic of the Supreme Lord. The *Adhyaryu* is a different person on whom the sacrifice rests as on a basis or foundation. In this case Krishna is both *upadrashtri* (as Supreme overlooker) and *Adhyaryu* or *Brahmā* as the supreme witness.—T.

§ The office of the *Hotri* is to take the supreme direction in the matter of pouring libations on the sacrificial fire.—T.

¶ *Gītām stotram* is explained by Nilakantha as *Udgātrikam*. Abhimanyu is not described here as the *Udgātri*, for that is Bhima, vide the next *śloka*. He is, however, the *hymn* that is chaunted by the

of fierce roars in battle, that tiger among men, the exceedingly mighty Bhima, will be the *Udgātri* and *Prastotri** in this sacrifice. King Yudhishtira of virtuous soul, ever enjoyed in *Yapa* and *Homa*, will himself be the *Brahman* of that sacrifice.† The sounds of conchs, tabors, and drums, and the leonine roars rising high into the welkin, will be the calls upon the invited to eat.‡ The two sons of Mādri, Nakula and Sahadeva, of great fame and prowess, will be the slayers of the sacrificial animals. Rows of bright cars furnished with standards of variegated hue will, O Govinda, be stakes (for tying the animals), O Janārdana, in this sacrifice! Barbed arrows and *Nālikas*, and long shafts, and arrows with heads like calf's tooth, will play the part of spoons (wherewith to distribute the *Soma* juice),§ while *Tomaras* will be the vessels of *Soma*, and bows will be *pavitras*.¶ The swords will be *Kapālas*, the heads (of slain warriors) the *Purodāças*, and the blood of warriors the clarified butter, O Krishna, in this sacrifice.§ The lances and bright maces (of the warriors) will

the hymn, viz, that is of great efficacy and that is supposed to be the very foundation of the merit won at a sacrifice.—T.

* Both imply almost the same function, viz, the chaunting of *Vedic* hymns.—T.

† The chief officiating priest who superintends the performance of the *Homa* is called *Brahman*. *Kārayishyati* is (here) *Karishyati*.—T

‡ *Subrahmanya* is the call to the invited guests to eat. Here, in this sacrifice, the guest is Death whose hunger must be appeased. These sounds will play the part of a call or warning to the guest that the feast is ready.—T.

§ *Nālikas* are capable of being identified with some kind of rude muskets. They are described as long cylinders of iron that vomited small pieces of iron. They were never used by brave warriors. The Burdwan Pundits make a mistake about the word *Vatsadanta*. It seems they do not know that it was a kind of weapon. Nilakantha expressly says *Karni-pravritayo-vatsadantāntās*.—T.

¶ *Pavitra* is a couple of *Kuça* leaves or blades, a span long, for sprinkling clarified butter. The bows, because of the weapons shot therefrom, might well be likened to *pavitras*. But why should *Tomaras* which are either iron clubs or crows or lances, be called *Soma*-vessels?—T.

§ *Kapālas* are earthen vessels for cooking the cakes called *Purodāças*

be pokers (for stirring the sacrificial fire) and the corner stakes (for keeping the fire-wood from falling down). The disciples of Drona and Kripa the son of Caradwat will be the *Sadasyas* (assisting priests). The arrows shot by the wielder of *Gāndiva* and by (other) mighty car-warriors, and by Drona and Drona's son, will play the part of ladders for distributing the *Soma*. *Sātyaki* will discharge the duties of the chief assistant of the *Adhyaryu*. Of this sacrifice, *Dhritarāshtra*'s son will be installed as the performer, while this vast army will be his wife. O thou of mighty arms, when the nocturnal rites of sacrifice will begin, the mighty *Ghatotkacha* will play the part of the slayer of (devoted) victims ! The mighty *Dhrishtadyumna*, who sprang into life from the sacrificial fire having for its mouth the rites celebrated with *mantras*, will, O Krishna, be the *Dakshinā* of that sacrifice ! For those harsh words, O Krishna, that I said before unto the sons of *Pāndu* for the gratification of *Dhritrāshtra*'s son,—for that wicked conduct of mine,—I am consumed with repentance ! When, O Krishna, thou wilt behold me slain by *Arjuna*, then will the *Punaçchiti** of this sacrifice commence ! When the (second) son of *Pāndu* will drink the blood of the loudly roaring *Dusçāsana*, then will the *Soma*-drinking of this sacrifice have taken place ! When the two princes of *Pāñchāla* (*Dhrishtadyumna* and *Cikhandi*) will overthrow *Drona* and *Bhishma*, then, O *Janārdana*, will this sacrifice be suspended for an interval † When

offerable at sacrifices. *Purodaças* are made of clarified butter and powdered barley or other grain. Swords, therefore, are spoken of as such vessels, and the heads of slain combatants as such cakes. T.

* After the completion of a sacrifice, a second part, consisting of some subsidiary rites and ceremonies, begins. This is called *Punaçchiti*.

† *Avasānam* is really conclusion or end. *Nilakantha*, however, explains it here as "an interval," referring to the intervals during which there is no work in a sacrifice. However well this explanation may accord with the history of the battle as it actually occurred, there is no harm in supposing that *Karna* here indulges in only a guess and is not endued with prophetic vision. What harm is there, then, in supposing that *Karna* believes that the sacrifice will actually terminate with the deaths of *Bhishma* and *Drona* ? These two were regarded as invincible and undy-

the mighty Bhimasena will slay Duryodhana, then, O Mādhava, will this sacrifice of Dhritarāshtra's son be concluded ! When the wives of Dhritarāshtra's sons and grandsons, assembled together, deprived, O Keçava, of their husbands and sons, and without protectors, will indulge in lamentations with Gāndhāri in their midst, on the field of battle haunted by dogs and vultures and other carnivorous birds, then, O Janārdana, will the final bath of this sacrifice take place !

“ ‘—I pray to thee, O bull of the Kshatriya race, let not (these) Kshatriyas, old in learning and old in years, perish miserably, O Janārdana, for thy sake ! Oh, let this swelling host of Kshatriyas perish by means of weapons on that most sacred of all spots in the three worlds, *viz*, Kurukshetra, O Keçava ! O thou of eyes like lotus leaves, accomplish on this spot what thou hast in thy mind, so that, O thou of Vrishni's race, the whole Kshatriya order may attain to heaven ! As long, O Janārdana, as the hills and the rivers will last, so long will the fame of these achievements last ! The Brāhmanas will recite this great war of the Bharatas ! The fame, O thou of Vrishni's race, that they achieve in battles is the wealth that Kshatriyas own ! O Keçava, bring Kunti's son (Arjuna) before me for battle, keeping for ever this our discourse a secret, O chastiser of foes !—’ ”

SECTION CXLI.

“Sanjaya said,—‘Hearing these words of Karna, Keçava, that slayer of hostile heroes, spoke unto him these words smilingly :—Do not the means of winning an empire recommend themselves to thee, O Karna ? Wishest thou not to rule over the whole Earth given by me to thee ? The victory of the Pāndavas, therefore, is very certain. There seems to be no doubt in this ! The triumphal banner of Pāndu's son, with the fierce ape on it, seems to be already set up ! The divine artificer, Bhaumana, hath applied such celestial illusion (in its construction) that it standeth high, displayed like

ing. For these reasons I think, *Avasānam* means termination, conclusion, end, although I have adopted Nilakantha's explanation in the text.—T.

Indra's banner ! Various celestial creatures of terrific shape, indicating victory, are seen on that standard ! Extending for a *Yojana* upwards and all around, that beautiful standard of Arjuna, resembling fire in radiance, is never, O Karna, when set up, obstructed by hills or trees ! When thou wilt behold in battle Arjuna, on his car drawn by white steeds and driven by Krishna, applying *Aindra* and *Agneya* and *Māruta* weapons, and when thou wilt hear the twang of *Gāndiva* piercing the welkin like the very thunder, then all signs of the *Krita*, the *Tretā*, and the *Dwāpara* ages will disappear (but, instead, *Kali* embodied will be present) ! When thou wilt behold in battle Kunti's son, the invincible Yudhishtira, devoted to *Yapa* and *Homa* and resembling the very sun in brilliance, protecting his own mighty army and burning the army of his foes, then all signs of the *Krita*, the *Tretā*, and the *Dwāpara* ages will disappear ! When thou wilt behold in battle the mighty Bhimasena dancing, after having quaffed the blood of *Dusṣāsana*, like a fierce elephant with rent temples after having killed a mighty antagonist, then all signs of the *Krita*, the *Tretā*, and the *Dwāpara* ages will disappear ! When thou wilt behold in battle Arjuna checking Drona and Cāntanu's son and Kripa and king Suyodhana, and Jayadratha of Sindhu's race, all rushing fiercely to the encounter, then all signs of the *Krita*, the *Tretā*, and the *Dwāpara* ages will disappear. When thou wilt behold in battle the two mighty sons of Mādri,—those heroic car-warriors capable of breaking into pieces all hostile cars,—agitating, from the very moment when weapons will begin to clash, the army of Dhritarāshtra's sons like a couple of infuriate elephants, then all signs of the *Krita*, the *Tretā*, and the *Dwāpara* ages will disappear ! Returning hence, O Karna, say unto Drona and Cāntanu's son and Kripa that the present month is a delightful one, and that food, drink, and fuel are abundant now ! All plants and herbs are vigorous now, all trees are full of fruits, and flies there are none !* The roads are free from mire,

* In certain seasons flies multiply in many parts of India to such a frightful extent as to become an unbearable pest.—T

and the waters are of agreeable taste. The weather is neither very hot nor very cold and is, therefore, highly pleasant.* Seven days after, will be the day of the new moon. Let the battle commence then, for that day, it hath been said, is presided over by Indra! Say also unto all the kings that have come for battling that I will fully accomplish the desire that is cherished by them! Indeed, all the kings and princes that are obedient to the orders of Duryodhana, obtaining death by weapons, will attain to an excellent state!—”

SECTION CXLII.

“Sanjaya said,—‘Hearing these beneficial and auspicious words of Keçava, Karna worshipped Krishna the slayer of Madhu and said these words:—Knowing (every thing), why dost thou yet, O thou of mighty arms, seek to beguile me? The destruction of the whole Earth that is at hand hath for its cause, Cakuni, and myself, and Duscāsana, and king Duryodhana the son of Dhritarāshtra. Without doubt, O Krishna, a great and fierce battle is at hand between the Pāndavas and the Kurus which will cover the earth with bloody mire! All the kings and princes following the lead of Duryodhana, consumed by the fire of weapons, will proceed to the abode of Yama! Diverse frightful visions are seen, O slayer of Madhu, and many terrible portents, and fierce disturbances also! All these omens, making the bristles (of the spectators) stand on their ends, indicate, O thou of Vrishni’s race, the defeat of Dhritarāshtra’s son and the victory of Yudhishtira! That

* All the adjectives in this *sloka* qualify *māsas*. When the month, therefore, is described as *nishpantas*, there can be no doubt that the roads are referred to. Kally Prasanna Singha erroneously supposes it to be an adjective of *toyas*. The grammar, in that case, would be incorrect. If read *Nishpanta* (without the *Visarga* which is changed into *O* by the rule of *sandhi*), the metre would be defective. The Burdwan Pandits, though right here, stumble at the next adjective and render it wrongly. *Nātyushna-çīçiras* is, as I have rendered it, “neither very hot nor very cold.”—T.

fierce planet of great effulgence, *Ṣanaīṣṣhara* (Saturn), is afflicting the constellation called *Rohini*,* in order to afflict greatly the creatures of the Earth! The planet *Angāraka* (Mars), wheeling, O slayer of Madhu, towards the constellation *Jeshthā*, approacheth towards *Anurādhā*, indicating a great slaughter of friends! Without doubt, O Krishna, a terrible calamity approacheth the Kurus when specially, O thou of Vrishni's race, the planet *Mahāpat* afflicteth the constellation *Chitrā*! The spot on the lunar disc hath changed its position; and *Rāhu* also approacheth towards the sun! Meteors are falling from the sky with loud noise and trembling motion! The elephants are sending forth frightful cries, while the steeds, O Mādhava, are shedding tears without taking any delight in food and drink! They have said, O thou of mighty arms, that on the appearance of these portents, a terrible calamity approacheth, productive of a great slaughter! O Keçava, amongst the steeds, elephants, and soldiers, in all the divisions of Duryodhana's army, it is seen, O slayer of Madhu, that while small is the food these take, ample is the excreta they evacuate! The wise have said that this is an indication of defeat! The elephants and steeds of the Pāndavas, O Krishna, all seem to be cheerful, while all the animals wheel along their right. This also is an indication of their success! The same animals, O Keçava, pass by the left side of Duryodhana's army; while incorporeal voices are constantly heard (over their head). All this is an indication of defeat! All auspicious birds, such as peacocks, swans, cranes, *Chātakas*, *Jivajivas*,† and large flights of *Vakas*, follow the Pāndavas, while vultures, *Kankas*, *Bakas*, hawks, *Rākshasas*, wolves, and bees, in flights and herds, follow the Kauravas! The drums in the army of Dhritarāshtra's son yield no sounds, while those of the Pāndavas, yield sounds without being struck. The wells in the midst of Duryodhana's encampment send

* The fourth lunar asterism consisting of probably five stars. So *Jeshthā*, *Anurādhā* and *Chitrā* are other asterisms of a similar nature.—F.

† A species of pheasants crying *Jiva, Jiva, i. e.* live live.—T.

forth loud roars like those of huge bulls. All this is an indication of defeat! The gods are showering flesh and blood, O Mādhava, on Duryodhana's soldiers! Vapoury edifices of great effulgence with high walls, deep trenches, and handsome porches, are suddenly appearing in the skies (over the Kuru encampment)! A black circle surrounding the solar disc appears to the view. Both twilights at sun-rise and sun-set indicate great terrors! The jackals yell hideously! All this is an indication of defeat! Diverse birds, each having but one wing, one eye, and one leg, utter terrible cries! All this, O slayer of Madhu, indicates defeat! Fierce birds with black wings and red legs hover over the Kuru encampment at night-fall! All this is an indication of defeat! The soldiers of Duryodhana betray hatred for Brāhmanas first, and then for their preceptors, and then for all their affectionate servants. The eastern horizon (of Duryodhana's encampment) appeareth red; the southern, of the hue of weapons; and the western, O slayer of Madhu, of an earthy hue! All the quarters around Duryodhana's encampment seem, O Mādhava, to be ablaze! In the appearance of all these portents, great is the danger that is indicated!

“—I have in a vision, O Achyuta, beheld Yudhishtira ascending with his brothers a palace supported by a thousand columns! All of them appeared with white head-gears and in white robes! And all of them appeared to me to be seated on white seats! In the midst of the same vision, thou, O Janārdana, wast beheld by me to be employed in enveloping the blood-dyed earth with weapons! Yudhishtira at the same-time, of immeasurable energy, ascending upon a heap of bones, was gladly eating buttered *pāyasa** off a golden cup! I further beheld Yudhishtira to be employed in swallowing the earth handed over to him by thee! This indicates that he will verily rule the earth. I beheld that tiger among men, Vrikodara, of fierce deeds, standing on the summit, mace in hand, and as if swallowing this earth! This plainly indicates that

* Rice boiled in milk with sugar. It is generally the last dish in a Hindu feast.—T.

he will slay all of us in fierce battle. It is known to me, O lord of the senses, that victory is there where righteousness is! I saw also Dhananjaya, the wielder of *Gāndiva*, seated on the back of a white elephant, with thee, O lord of the senses, and blazing forth with great beauty! I have no doubt, O Krishna, that ye will slay in battle all the kings headed by Duryodhana! I saw Nakula and Sahadeva and that mighty car-warrior Sātyaki adorned with white bracelets, white cuirasses,* white garlands, and white robes! These tigers among men were seated upon excellent vehicles borne on the shoulders of men. And I saw that umbrellas were held over the heads of all the three! Amongst the soldiers of Dhritarāshtra's son, these three, O Janārdhana, were beheld by me decked with white head-gears. Know, O Keçava, that those three were Açwatthāman, Kripa, and Kritavarman of Sātwata's race! All other kings, O Mādhava, were seen by me to have blood-red head-gears. I saw also, O thou of mighty arms, that those mighty car-warriors, Bhishma and Drona, ascending on a vehicle drawn by camels, and accompanied by myself and Dhritarāshtras's son, proceeded, O lord, to the quarter, O Janārdhana, ruled by Agastya † This indicates that we shall

* The word in the original is *Kanthatra*, literally anything that protects the neck. It was probably some kind of breast-plate or cuirass reaching high up the neck also, or probably not reaching far down the breast.—T.

† *I. e.*, the southern quarter, which is Yama's own. The southern is called Agastya's quarter in consequence of a somewhat remarkable myth. It is said that at one time the mountain *Vindhya* increased his body to such an extent as to obstruct the course of the Sun. The gods were alarmed, and in their distress applied to the sage Agastya who was the preceptor of Vindhya. Agastya, who dwelt in Northern India, resolved to proceed to the south. And as he set out and reached the foot of Vindhya, the latter, beholding his venerable preceptor, bowed down his head for worshipping him. Agastya asked him to stay in that posture till he came back. And as he never came back but took up his permanent abode in the forest of Dandaka in the south, Vindhya has ever since been obliged to stay in that posture to the relief of all the creatures of the Earth.—T

soon have to proceed to Yama's abode! I have no doubt that myself and the other kings, indeed, the entire assemblage of Kshatriyas, shall have to enter into the *Gāndīva* fire!—

“Krishna said,—Indeed, the destruction of the Earth is at hand when my words, O Karna, do not become acceptable to thy heart! O sire, when the destruction of all creatures approacheth, wrong assuming the semblance of right leaveth not the heart!*

“Karna said,—If, O Krishna, we come out of this great battle that will be so destructive of heroic Kshatriyas, with life, then, O thou of mighty arms, may we meet here again! Otherwise, O Krishna, we shall certainly meet in heaven! O sinless one, it seemeth to me now that there only it is possible for us to meet!—

“Sanjaya said,—Having spoken these words, Karna tightly pressed Mādhava to his bosom. Dismissed by Keçava, he then descended from the car. And riding on his own car decked with gold, Rādhā's son, greatly dejected, came back with us!”

SECTION CXLIII.

Vaiçampāyana said,—“Upon the failure of Krishna's solicitations (for peace), and after he had started for the Pāndavas from the Kurus, Kshatri approached Prithā and said these words slowly in grief:—‘O mother of living children, thou knowest that my inclination is always for peace, and although I cry myself hoarse, yet Suyodhana doth not accept my words! King Yudhishtira, having the Chedis, the Pāñchālas, and the Kekayas, Bhima and Arjuna, Krishna, Yuyudhāna, and the twins, for his allies, stayeth yet at Upaplavya, and from affection for kinsmen, looketh up to righteousness only, like a weak man, though he is possessed of great strength! King Dhritarāshtra here, though old in years, doth not affect peace, and intoxicated with pride of children, treadeth in a sinful path! In consequence of the wickedness of Jayadratha and Karna and Duscāsana and Suvala's son, intestine dissensions

* I. e. continues to adhere to the heart.—T.

will break out. They that behave unrighteously towards him that is righteous, verily, that sin* of theirs soon produceth its consequences! Who is there that will not be filled with sorrow at the sight of the Kurus persecuting righteousness in this way! When Keçava returneth without being able to bring about peace, the Pāṇdavas will certainly address themselves for battle! Thereupon, the sin of the Kurus will lead to a destruction of heroes! Reflecting on all this, I do not get sleep by day or by night!

"Hearing these words uttered by Vidura who always wished her sons the accomplishment of their objects,† Kunti began to sigh heavily, afflicted with grief, and began to think within herself,—'Fie to wealth, for the sake of which this great slaughter of kinsmen is about to take place! Indeed, in this war, they that are friends will sustain defeat.‡ What can be a greater grief than this that the Pāṇdavas, the Chedis, the Pāṇchālas, and the Yādavas, assembled together, will fight with the Bharatas? Verily, I behold demerit in war! (On the other hand) if we do not fight, poverty and humiliation would be ours! As regards the person that is poor, even death is beneficial (to him)! (On the other hand) the extermination of one's kinsmen is not victory.§ As I reflect

* *Dharmas* used ironically. Or, it may mean, conduct.—T.

† *Arthakāmena* refers here to Vidura, and is explained by Nilakantha to mean *Hitakāmena*.—T.

‡ What Kunti says is this,—War takes place between foes, and not friends. Here, it is friends between whom there will be hostilities. One side is surely to be defeated; but who are they? Are they not friends that will suffer defeat, whichever the party be?—T.

§ Kally Prasanna Singha makes a mess of this beautiful *śloka*. It is not possible that he adopts a different reading, for all the texts read this *śloka* alike. The Roy Press edition has three misprints; first *Paçya* for *prçye*, and *yathā* for *tathā*, and a space between *yathā* and *yuddhe*, concealing the *sandhi*, for the word is not *yuddhe* but *ayuddhe*. The contrasts are pointed, for what Kunti says is,—'In *yuddha* there is demerit, in *ayuddha* is humiliation (so far as we are concerned). Poverty, again, is worse than death; while affluence won by slaughtering kinsmen is not desirable. The Burdwan Pundits are, of course, right.—T.

on this, my heart swelleth with sorrow. The grandsire (Bhishma) the son of Cāntanu, the preceptor (Drona) who is the foremost of warriors, and Karna, having embraced Duryodhana's side, enhance my fears! The preceptor Drona, it seemeth to me, will never fight willingly against his disciples. As regards the grandsire, why will he not show some affection for the Pāṇdavas? There is only this sinful Karna then, of deluded understanding and ever following the deluded lead of the wicked Duryodhana, that hateth the Pāṇdavas! Obstinate pursuing that which injureth the Pāṇdavas, this Karna is again very powerful! It is this which burneth me at present. Proceeding to gratify him I will today disclose the truth and seek to draw his heart towards the Pāṇdavas! Pleased with me while I was living in the inner apartments of the palace of my father Kuntibhoja, the holy Durvāsas gave me a boon in the form of an invocation consisting of *mantras*. Long reflecting with a trembling heart on the strength or weakness of those *māntras* and the power also of the Brāhmaṇa's words, and in consequence also of my disposition as a woman and my nature as a girl of unripe years, deliberating repeatedly, and while guarded by a confidential nurse and surrounded by my waiting-maids, and thinking also of how to incur no reproach, how to maintain the honor of my father, and how I myself might have an accession of good fortune without being guilty of any transgression, I at last remembered that Brāhmaṇa and bowed to him, and having obtained that *mantra*, from excess of curiosity and from folly I summoned, during my maidenhood, the god *Surya*! He, therefore, who was held in my womb during my maidenhood,—why should not *he*,—obey my words that are certainly acceptable and beneficial to his brothers?—And reflecting in this strain, Kunti formed an excellent resolution. And having formed that resolution she went to the sacred stream called after Bhagiratha.* And having reached the banks of *Gangā*, Prithā

* The *Ganges* or *Gangā*, brought down to the Earth by Bhagiratha of the Solar race for the salvation of his ancestors, the sixty thousand sons of king Sagara, reduced to ashes by the curse of the sage *Kapila*.—T.

heard the chaunt of *Vedic* hymns by her son endued with great kindness and firmly devoted to truth. And as Karna stood with face directed to the East and arms upraised, the helpless Kunti, for the sake of her business, stayed behind him, waiting the completion of his prayers. And that lady of Vrishni's race, that wife of Kuru's house, afflicted by the heat of the sun, began to look like a faded garland of lotuses. And at last she stood in the shade afforded by the upper garments of Karna. And Karna, of regulated vows, said his prayers until his back became heated by the rays of the sun. Then turning behind, he beheld Kunti and was filled with surprise. And saluting her in proper form and with joined palms, that foremost of virtuous persons, endued with great energy and pride, *viz*, Vrisha the son of Vikartana, bowed to her and said (the following words)!*

SECTION CXLIV.

"Karna said,—I am Karna the son of Rādhā and Adhiratha. For what, O lady, hast thou come here! Tell me what I am to do for thee!"

"Kunti said,—Thou art Kunti's son, and not Rādhā's! Nor is Adhiratha thy father! Thou, O Karna, art not born in the *Suta* order! Believe what I say! Thou wert brought forth by me while a maiden. I held thee first in my womb. O son, thou wert born in the palace of Kuntirāja! O Karna, that divine Surya who blazeth forth in light and maketh everything visible, O foremost of all wielders of weapons, begat thee upon me! O irresistible one, thou, O son, wert brought forth by me in my father's abode, decked with (natural) ear-ring's and accoutred in a (natural) coat of mail and blazing forth in beauty! That thou, without knowing thy brothers, shouldst, therefore, from ignorance, wait upon Dhritarāshtra's

* *Utsayan* is explained by Nilakantha as *Udgatavismayas*. *Vrisha*, of course, is one of the many names by which Karna was known. "Until his back was heated by the rays of the sun,"—this implies that Karna said his prayers till the Sun passed the meridian.—T.

son, is not proper ! It is improper in thee especially, O son ! The gratification of one's fathers and one's mother who is the sole displayer of affection (for her child), hath, O son, in the matter of ascertaining the duties of men, been declared to be the highest of all duties ! Acquired before by Arjuna, the prosperity of Yudhishtira hath, from avarice, been wrested by wicked persons ! Snatching it back from Dhritarāshtra's sons, do thou enjoy that prosperity ! Let the Kurus behold today the union of Karna and Arjuna ! Beholding thee and thy brother united together in bonds of brotherly love, let those wicked persons bow down unto ye ! Let Karna and Arjuna be named in the same breath as Rāma and Janārdana are ! If you two are united together, what is that which cannot be accomplished in the world ? O Karna, surrounded by thy brothers, thou wilt, without doubt, blaze like Brāhman himself surrounded by the gods on the platform of a great sacrifice ! Endued with every virtue, thou art the first of all my relatives ! Let not the epithet—*Suta's son*—attach to thee ! Thou art a *Pārtha*, endued with great energy ! ”

SECTION CXLV.

Vaiçampāyana said.—(After Kunti had said this), Karna heard an affectionate voice issued out of the solar circle. Coming from a great distance, that voice was uttered by *Surya* himself with paternal affection. (And it said)—‘The words said by Prithā are true. O Karna, act according to the words of thy mother ! O tiger among men, great good will result to thee if thou fully followest those words ! ’ ”

Vaiçampāyana continued.—‘Though thus addressed by his mother, and by also his father *Surya* himself, Karna's heart did not yet waver, for he was firmly devoted to truth. And he said,—‘O Kshatriya lady, I cannot admit what thou hast said, viz, that obedience to thy commands constituteth (in my case) the highest of my duties.* O mother, I was abandoned by thee as soon as I was born ! This great injury, involving risk to life itself, that thou didst me hath been

* *Dharmadwāra*, literally—“the gates of *Dharma*.”—T.

destructive of my achievements and fame ! If, indeed, I am a Kshatriya, I have, for thee, been deprived of all the rites of a Kshatriya ! What enemy would have done me a greater injury ? Without showing me mercy when thou shouldst have shown it, and having kept me divested of all the rites (that are obligatory in consequence of the order of my birth), thou wouldst, however, lay thy commands on me today ! Thou hadst never before sought my good as a mother should. Thou addressest me today, however, desiring to do good to thyself ! Who is there that would not be afraid of Dhananjaya having Krishna with him (for the driver of his car) ? If, therefore, I go today unto the Pārthas, who is there that would not regard me as doing so from fright ? Hitherto nobody knew me to be their brother. If, giving out on the eve of battle that I am their brother, I go to the Pāndavas, what would all the Kshatriyas say ? Furnished with every object of desire, and worshipped by them with a view to make me happy, how can I render that worship of Dhritarāshtra's sons utterly futile ? Having provoked hostilities with others, they always wait on me respectfully, and always bow down to me as the Vasus bow down to Vāsava ! They think that aided by my might, they are capable of encountering the foe. How can I then frustrate that cherished hope of theirs ? With me as their boat, they desire to cross the impassable ocean of battle ! How can I then abandon them that are desirous of crossing that ocean which hath no other ferry ? This is the time when all those that have been supported by Dhritarāshtra's sons should exert themselves for their masters ! I shall certainly act for them, reckless of even my life ! Those sinful men of unsteady heart, who, well-fed and well-furnished (with every necessary) by their masters, undo the benefit received by them when the time cometh for paying back those benefits,—verily, those sinful men, those faithless servants of kings, those thieves of their master's cakes,*—have neither this nor the other world for

* *Bhatripindāpahāri*—Vide note *Supra* p. There is another very expressive Urdu word current in all parts of India bearing the same sense. It is *Nimakkārām* or “untrue to (the master's) salt.”—

them ! I will not speak deceitfully unto thee. For the sake of Dhritarāshtra's son, I shall fight with thy sons to the best of my strength and might ! I must not, however, abandon kindness and the conduct that becometh the good. Thy words, therefore, however beneficial, cannot be obeyed by me now ! This thy solicitation to me will not yet be fruitless. Except Arjuna, thy other sons, Yudhishtira, Bhima, and the twins, though capable of being withstood by me in fight and capable also of being slain, shall not yet be slain by me ! It is with Arjuna alone, among all the combatants of Yudhishtira, that I will fight ! Slaying Arjuna in battle I shall achieve great merit, or slain by Savyasāchin I shall be covered with glory ! O famous lady, the number of thy sons will never be less than five. Five it will always be either without Arjuna and with me, or with Arjuna and myself slain !

"Hearing these words of Karna, Kunti who was trembling with grief, embraced her son who was unmoved in consequence of his fortitude, and said,—'Indeed, O Karna, even what thou sayest seemeth to be possible. The Kauravas will certainly be exterminated. Destiny is all powerful. Thou hast, however, O grinder of foes, granted to four of thy brothers the pledge of safety. Let that pledge be borne in thy remembrance during the shooting of weapons in battle !' And having told all this, Prithā also addressed Karna, saying,—'Blessed be thou, and let health be thine !'—And Karna replied unto her, saying,—'Be it so !' And they then left the spot, wending in different directions."

SECTION CXLVI.

Vaiçampāyana said,—"Coming back to Upaplavya from Hāstinapura, that chastiser of foes, Keçava, represented unto the Pāndavas all that had happened. And conferring with them for a long space of time, and holding repeated consultations, Cauri went to his own quarters for rest. And dismissing all the kings with Virāta and others at their head, the five brothers—the Pāndavas—when the sun had set, said their

evening prayers.* And with hearts ever fixed on Krishna, they began to think of him. And at last bringing Krishna of Daçārha's race into their midst, they began to deliberate again about what they should do. And Yudhishtira said,—‘O thou of eyes like lotus petals, it behoveth thee to tell us all that thou saidst unto Dhritarāshtra's son in the assembly (of the Kurus), having gone to Nāgapura!’ Vāsudeva said,—‘Having gone to Nāgapura, I addressed Dhritarāshtra's son in the assembly such words as were true, seasonable, and beneficial! That wicked-minded wight did not, however, accept them!’

“Yudhishtira said,—“When Duryodhana desired to tread along the wrong path, what did the aged Kuru grandsire say, O Hrishikeça, unto that vindictive prince? What also did the highly-blessed preceptor—the son of Bharadwāja—say? And what did his parents Dhritarāshtra and Gāndhāri say? What did our junior father Kshattri, who is the foremost of all persons conversant with virtue and who is always afflicted with sorrow on account of ourselves whom he regards as his sons, say unto Dhritarāshtra's son? What also did all the kings who sat in that assembly say? O Janārdhana, say it all unto us, exactly as it happened! Thou hast already told us all the disagreeable words that the two Kuru chiefs (Bhishma and Dhritarāshtra) and others in that assembly of the Kurus said unto the wicked Duryodhana who is overwhelmed with lust and covetousness and who regardeth himself wise! Those words, however, O Keçava, have flitted away from my memory! O Govinda, I desire to hear, O lord, all those words again! Act thou in such a way that the opportunity may not pass away! Thou, O Krishna, art our refuge, thou art our lord, and thou art our guide!”

“Vāsudeva said,—‘Hear, O king, the words that were addressed to king Suyodhana in the midst of the assembly of the Kurus, and, O king of kings, bear them in thy mind! After my words were ended, Dhritarāshtra's son laughed aloud. Highly incensed at this, Bhishma then said,—Hear, O Duryodhana, what I say for (the preservation of) our race,

* Literally, “worshipped the evening twilight.”—T

and having heard it, O tiger among kings, do what is beneficial to thy own house ! O sire, O king, my father Cāntanu, was widely known in the world. I was at first his only son. A desire sprung up in his heart as to how he might obtain a second son, for the wise say that an only son is no son.—*Let not my race be extinct ! How may my fame be spread !*—Even this was his desire. Knowing this to have been his desire, I procured Kāli* to become my mother, having myself made a promise highly difficult to observe, for the sake of my father as also for the sake of our race. How in consequence of that promise I could not be king and have drawn up my vital seed, are, of course, well-known to thee ! (I do not grieve for that). Observing that vow of mine, behold, I am living in happiness and joy ! In her, O king, was born my younger brother, that mighty-armed and handsome supporter of Kuru's race, viz. Vichitravirya of virtuous soul ! After my father's ascension to heaven I installed Vichitravirya as ruler of the kingdom that was mine, while I placed myself under him as a servant of his. O king of kings, I then brought him suitable wives, having vanquished many assembled monarchs. Thou hast heard of it often. Sometime after I was engaged in a single combat with the (great) Rāma.† From fear of Rāma, my brother fled, the more so as his subjects deserted him.‡ During this period he became very much attached to his wives and accordingly had an attack of pthisis. Upon his death there was anarchy in the kingdom and the chief of the gods poured not a drop of rain (on the realm). The subjects then, afflicted by fear of hunger, hastened to me, and said,—Thy subjects are on the point of being exterminated ! Be thou our king for the sake of our good ! Dispel this drought § Blessed be thou, O perpetuator

* Otherwise called Gandhakāli, Satyavati, Matsyagandhā, *Fojana-gandhā*, &c.,—T.

† Jamadagni's son who had exterminated the Kshatriya race one and twenty times ; who had taught Bhishma the use of weapons ; and from whom Drona had obtained many of his weapons.—T.

‡ I think Nilakantha explains this rightly. *Vipravāsita* is exiled.—T.

§ Drought, inundation, locusts, &c., are known by the name of *Iti*. Here, however, it is drought that is implied by the word.—T.

of Cāntanu's race! Thy subjects are being greatly afflicted by severe and frightful maladies. Very few of them are still alive! It behoveth thee, O son of Gangā, to save them! Dispel thee tortures! O hero, cherish thy subjects righteously! When thou art alive, let not the kingdom go to destruction!—Hearing these words of theirs uttered in a weeping tone, my heart was undisturbed! Remembering the behaviour of the good, I desired to maintain my vow. Then, O king, the citizens, my auspicious mother Kāli herself, our servants, the priests and the preceptors (of our house), and many Brāhmanas of great learning, all afflicted with great woe, solicited me to occupy the throne. And they said,—When thou art alive, shall the kingdom ruled by Pratipa (of old) go to ruin? O thou of magnanimous heart, be thou the king for our good!—Thus addressed by them, I joined my hands together and, myself filled with grief and greatly afflicted, I represented to them the vow I had made from filial respect. I repeatedly informed them that for the sake of our race I had vowed to live with vital seed drawn up and foreswearing the throne. It was especially for my mother again that I did so. I, therefore, begged them not to put me to the yoke. I again joined my hands and conciliated my mother, saying, O mother, begot by Cāntanu and being a member of Kuru's race, I cannot falsify my promise!—I repeatedly told her this! And O king, I said further,—It is for thee especially, O mother, that I took this vow! I am verily thy servant and slave, O mother, O thou that art distinguished for parental affection!—Having begged my mother and the people thus, I then solicited the great sage Vyasa for begetting children upon the wives of my brother! Indeed, O king, both myself and my mother gratified that *Rishi*. At last, O king, the *Rishi* granted our prayers in the matter of the children. And he begot three sons in all, O best of Bharata's race! Thy father was born blind, and in consequence of this congenital defect of a sense, he could not become king. The high-souled and celebrated Pāndu became king. And when Pāndu became king, his sons must obtain their paternal inheritance. O sire, do not quarrel, give them half the kingdom! When I am alive, what

other man is competent to reign ? Do not disregard my words. I only wish that there should be peace amongst you. O sire, O king, I make no distinction between thee and them (but love all of you equally) ! What I have said unto thee represents also the opinion of thy father, of Gāndhāri, and also of Vidura ! The words of those that are old should always be listened to. Do not disregard these words of mine ! Do not destroy all thou hast and the Earth also !—’ ”

SECTION CXLVII.

“Vāsudeva said,—‘After Bhishma had said these words, Drona, always competent to speak, then addressed Duryodhana in the midst of the (assembled) monarchs and said these words that are beneficial to thee ! And he said,—O sire, as Pratipa’s son Cāntanu was devoted to the welfare of his race, and as Devavrata, otherwise called Bhishma, was devoted to the welfare of his race, so was the royal Pāndu, that king of the Kurus, who was firmly devoted to truth, who had his passions under control, who was virtuous, of excellent vows, and attentive to all duties ! (Though king by right) that perpetuator of Kuru’s race yet made over the sovereignty to his elder brother Dhritarāshtra endued with great wisdom, and to his younger brother *Kshattri* (Vidura). And placing this Dhritarāshtra of unfading glory on the throne, that royal son of Kuru’s race went to the woods with his two wives. And that tiger among men, Vidura, with great humility, placing himself in subjection to Dhritarāshtra, began to wait on him like a slave, fanning him with the branch of a young palm. And all the subjects then, O sire, duly tendered their submission to king Dhritarāshtra just as they had done to king Pāndu himself. And having made over the kingdom to Dhritarāshtra and Vidura, that conqueror of hostile cities, Pāndu, wandered over the whole Earth. Always devoted to truth, Vidura then took charge of the finances, gifts, superintendence of the servants (of the State), and the feeding of all ; while that conqueror of hostile cities, Bhishma of mighty energy, supervised the making of war and peace and the necessity of making or with-

holding gifts to kings. When king Dhritarāshtra of great strength was on the throne, the high-souled Vidura was ever near him! Born in Dhritarāshtra's race, how dost thou venture to bring about a disunion in thy family? Uniting with thy brothers (the Pāndavas), enjoy all objects of enjoyment, O king! I do not say this to you from cowardice, nor for the sake of wealth. I am enjoying the wealth that Bhishma gave me, and not thou, O best of kings! I do not desire, O king, to have from thee my means of sustenance! Where Bhishma is, there Drona must be! Do what Bhishma hath told thee! O grinder of foes, give unto the sons of Pāndu half the kingdom! O sire, I acted as their preceptor as much as thine Indeed, even as Açwatthāman is to me, so is Arjuna of white steeds! What use is there of much declamation? Victory is there where righteousness is!—'

"Vāsudeva continued,—'After Drona of immeasurable energy had said this, the virtuous Vidura then, O king, who is devoted to truth, said these words, turning towards his father (Bhishma) and looking at his face! And Vidura said,—O Devavrata, attend to the words I speak! This race of Kuru, when it became extinct, was revived by thee! Is it for this that thou art indifferent to my lamentations now? In this our race who is this Duryodhana, its stain, whose inclinations are followed by thee although he is enslaved by avarice, and is wicked and ungrateful and deprived of his senses by lust! The Kurus will certainly be exterminated in consequence of the acts of that Duryodhana who transgresseth the commands of his father observant of virtue and profit! O great king, act thou so that the Kurus may not perish! Like a painter producing a picture, it was thou, O king, who hadst caused me and Dhritarāshtra to spring into life!* The Creator, having created creatures, destroys them again! Do not act like him! Seeing before thy very eyes this extinction of thy race, be not indifferent to it! If, however, thy understand-

* The meaning seems to be, that do not, like a painter destroying the creations of his own pencil, destroy us now, but see that those whom thou hadst created may yet live!—T.

ing is gone in consequence of the universal slaughter that is at hand, go then to the woods, taking me and Dhritarāshtra with thee! Otherwise, binding this very day, the wicked Duryodhana that hath deceit for his wisdom, rule this kingdom with the sons of Pāndu guarding it around! Relent, O tiger among kings! A great slaughter is before us of the Pāndavas, the Kurus, and of other kings of immeasurable-energy —!

“Having said this, Vidura ceased, his heart overflowing with sorrow. And reflecting on the matter, he began to draw repeated sighs. Then the daughter of king Suvala, alarmed at the prospect of the destruction of a whole race, said, from wrath, these words fraught with virtue and profit, to the cruel Duryodhana of wicked heart, in the presence of the assembled monarchs.—Let all the kings present in this royal assembly and let the regenerate *Rishis* that form the other members of this conclave, listen (to me) as I proclaim the guilt of thy sinful self backed by all thy counsellors!* The kingdom of the Kurus is enjoyable in due order of succession. Even this hath always been the custom of our race! Of sinful soul and exceedingly wicked in acts, thou seekest the destruction of the Kuru kingdom by thy unrighteousness. The wise Dhritarāshtra is in possession of the kingdom, having Vidura of great foresight under him (as his adviser). Passing over these two, why, O Duryodhana, dost thou, from delusion, covet the sovereignty now? Even the high-souled king and Kshattri, when Bhishma is alive, should both be subordinate to him. Indeed, this foremost of men, this offspring of Gangā, the high-souled Bhishma, in consequence of his righteousness, doth not desire the sovereignty. It is for this reason that this invincible kingdom became Pāndu's. His sons, therefore, are masters today and no others. This extensive kingdom, then, by paternal right, belongeth to the Pāndavas, and their sons and grandsons in due order. Observing the customs

* *Sāmītyapariśadasya* is literally “with thy counsellors forming thy garments.” Kālidāsa uses “*Senā-parīśadas*” in his Canto I, *śloka* 19.—T.

of our race and the rule with respect to our kingdom, we must all fully accomplish that which this high-souled and wise chief of the Kurus, Devavrata, firmly adhering to truth, sayeth! Let this king (Dhritarāshtra) and Vidura also, at the command of Bhishma of great vows, proclaim the same thing! Even that is an act that should be done by those that are well-wishers (of this race)! Keeping virtue in front, let Yudhishtira then on of Dharma, guided by king Dhritarāshtra and urged by Cāntanu's son, rule for many long years this kingdom of the Kurus lawfully obtainable by him!—”

SECTION CXLVIII.

“Vāsudeva said,—After Gāndhāri had said this, that ruler of men, Dhritarāshtra, then said these words unto Duryodhana in the midst of the (assembled) monarchs:—O Duryodhana, listen, O son, to what I say, and blessed be thou, do that if thou hast any respect for thy father! The lord of creatures, *Soma*, was the original progenitor of the Kuru race. Sixth in descent from *Soma* was *Yayāti* the son of *Nahusha*. *Yayāti* had five best of royal sages for his sons. Amongst them, the lord *Yadu* of mighty energy was the eldest-born. Younger to *Yadu* was *Puru* who was our progenitor, brought forth by *Carmishthā* the daughter of *Vrishaparvan*. *Yadu*, O best of the *Bharatas*, was born of *Devayāni* and, therefore, O sire, was the daughter's-son of *Cukra*, otherwise called *Kāvyā*, of immeasurable energy. Endued with great strength and prowess, that progenitor of the *Yādavas*, filled with pride and possessed of wicked understanding, humiliated all the *Kshatriyas*. Intoxicated with pride of strength, he obeyed not the injunctions of his father. Invincible in battle, he insulted his father and his brothers. On this earth girt on four sides by the sea, *Yadu* became all powerful, and reducing all to subjection, he established himself in this city called after the elephant. His father *Yayāti* the son of *Nahusha*, enraged with him, cursed that son of his, and, O son of *Gāndhāri*, even expelled him from the kingdom! The angry *Yayāti* also cursed those brothers of *Yadu* who were obedient to that eldest

brother of theirs who was so proud of his strength. And having cursed these his sons, that best of kings placed on his throne his youngest son Puru who was docile and obedient to him. Thus even the eldest son may be passed over and deprived of the kingdom, and younger sons may, in consequence of their respectful behaviour to the aged, obtain the kingdom ! So also, conversant with every virtue, there was my father's grandfather, king Pratipa, who was celebrated over the three worlds. Unto that lion among kings who ruled his kingdom virtuously were born three sons of great fame and resembling three gods. Of them, Devāpi was the eldest, Vālhika the next, and Cāntanu of great intelligence, who, O sire, was my grandfather, was the youngest. Devāpi, endued with great energy was virtuous, truthful in speech, and ever engaged in waiting upon his father. But that best of kings had a skin-disease.* Popular with both the citizens and the subjects of the provinces, respected by the good, and dearly loved by the young and the old, Devāpi was liberal, firmly adhering to truth, engaged in the good of all creatures, and obedient to the instructions of his father as also of the Brāhmanas. He was dearly loved by his brother Vālhika as also the high-souled Cāntanu. Great, indeed, was the brotherly love that prevailed between him and his high-souled brothers. In course of time the old and best of kings, Pratipa, caused all preparations to be made according to the scriptures for the installation of Devāpi (on the throne). Indeed, the lord Pratipa caused every auspicious preparation. The installation of Devāpi, however, was forbidden by the Brāhmanas and all aged persons amongst the citizens and the inhabitants of the provinces. Hearing that the installation of his son was forbidden, the voice of the old king became choked with tears and he began to grieve for his son. Thus though Devāpi was liberal, virtuous, devoted to truth, and loved by the subjects, yet in consequence of his skin-disease he was excluded from his inheritance. The gods do not approve of a king that is defective of a limb. Thinking of this, those bulls among Brāhmanas forbade king Pratipa to install his eldest son.

* Explained by Nilakantha as leprosy.—T.

Devāpi then, who was defective of one limb, beholding the king (his father) prevented (from installing him on the throne) and filled with sorrow on his account, retired into the woods. As regards Vālhika, abandoning his (paternal) kingdom he dwelt with his maternal uncle. Abandoning his father and brother, he obtained the highly wealthy kingdom of his maternal grandfather. With Vālhika's permission, O prince, Cāntanu of world-wide fame, on the death of his father (Pratipa), became king and ruled the kingdom. In this way also, O Bhārata, though I am the eldest, yet being defective of a limb, I was excluded from the kingdom by the intelligent Pāndu, no doubt, after much reflection. And Pāndu himself, though younger to me in age, obtained the kingdom and became king. At his death, O chastiser of foes, that kingdom must pass to his sons! When I could not obtain the kingdom, how canst thou covet it? Thou art not the son of a king and, therefore, hast no right to this kingdom. Thou, however, desirest to appropriate the property of others! The high-souled Yudhishtira is the son of a king. This kingdom is lawfully his. Of magnanimous soul, even he is the ruler and lord of this race of Kuru! He is devoted to truth, of clear perception, obedient to the counsels of friends, honest, loved by the subjects, kind to all well-wishers, master of his passions, and the cherisher of all that are good! Forgiveness, renunciation, self-control, knowledge of the scriptures, mercy to all creatures, competence to rule according to the dictates of virtue, all these attributes of royalty exist in Yudhishtira! Thou art not the son of a king and art always sinfully inclined towards thy relatives! O wretch, how canst thou succeed in appropriating this kingdom that lawfully belongeth to others? Dispelling this delusion, give half the kingdom with (a share of the) animals and other possessions! Then, O king, mayst thou hope to live for some time with thy younger brothers!—”

SECTION CXLIX.

* "Vāsudeva said,—Though thus addressed by Bhishma, and Drona, and Vidura, and Gāndhāri, and Dhritarāshtra, that wicked wīght could not yet be brought to his senses. On the other hand, the wicked Duryodhana, disregarding them all, rose (and left the assembly) with eyes red in anger. And all the kings (invited by him), prepared to lay down their lives, followed him behind. King Duryodhana then repeatedly ordered those wicked-hearted rulers, saying,—*Today the consellation Pushya is ascendant.—March ye (this very day) to Kurukshatra !* Impelled by Fate, those monarchs then, with their soldiers, gladly set out, making Bhishma their generalissimo. Eleven *Akshauhinis* of troops have been, O king, assembled for the Kauravas. At the head of that host shineth Bhishma with the device of the palmyra on the banner of his car. In view, therefore, of what hath happened, do now, O monarch, that which seemeth to be proper ! I have told thee, O king, everything that occurred in the assembly of the Kurus,—everything, O Bhārata, that was said by Bhishma, Drona, Vidura, Gāndhāri, and Dhritarāshtra, in my presence ! The arts beginning with conciliation were all, O king, employed by me from desire of establishing brotherly feelings (between yourselves and your cousins), for the preservation of this race, and for the growth and prosperity of the (Earth's) population. When conciliation failed, I employed the art of (producing) dissensions and mentioned, ye Pāndavas, all your ordinary and extraordinary feats. Indeed, when Suyodhana showed no respect for the conciliatory words (I spoke), I caused all the kings to be assembled together and endeavored to produce dissension (amongst them). Extraordinary and awful and terrible and superhuman indications, O Bhārata, were then manifested by me, O lord ! Rebuking all the kings, making a straw of Suyodhana, terrifying Rādhā's son, and repeatedly censuring Suvala's son for the gambling match of Dhritarāshtra's sons, and once again endeavouring to disunite all the

kings by means both of words and intrigues, I again had recourse to conciliation. For the unity of Kurū's race and in view of the especial requirements of the business (at hand), I spoke also of gift. Indeed, I said,—Those heroes, the sons of Pāndu, sacrificing their pride, will live in dependance on Dhritarāshtra, Bhishma, and Vidura! Let the kingdom be given to thee. Let them have no power. Let it all be as the king (Dhritarāshtra), as Gangā's son (Bhishma), and as Vidura, say for thy good! Let the kingdom be thine. Relinquish but five villages (to the Pāndavas)! O best of kings, without doubt they deserve to be supported by thy father!—Though addressed thus, that wicked-souled wight would not still give you your share. I, therefore, see that chastisement, and nothing else, is now the means that should be employed against those sinful persons! Indeed, all those kings have already marched to Kurukshetra! I have now told thee everything that happened in the assembly of the Kurus. They will not, O son of Pāndu, give thee thy kingdom without battle! With death waiting before them, they have all become the cause of a universal destruction!"

SECTION CL.

(*Sainya-niryāna Parva*).

Vaiçampāyana said.—“Hearing these words of Janārdhana, king Yudhishtira the just, of virtuous soul, addressed his brothers in the presence of Keçava and said,—Ye have heard all that happened in the court of the assembled Kurus! Ye have also understood the words uttered by Keçava! Ye best of men, array, therefore, my troops now in the order in which they are to fight. Here are seven *Akshauhinis* of troops assembled for our victory! Hear the names of those seven celebrated warriors that would lead those seven *Akshauhinis*! They are Drupada, and Virāta, and Dhrishtadyumna, and Çikhandi, and Sātyaki, and Chekitāna, and Bhimasena of great energy! These heroes will be the leaders of my troops. All of them are conversant with the *Vedas*. Endued with great bra-

very, all of them have practised excellent vows. Possessed of modesty, all of them are conversant with policy, and accomplished in war. Well-skilled in arrows and weapons, all of them are competent in the use of every kind of weapon. Tell us now, O Sahadeva, O son of Kuru's race, who that warrior is, conversant with all kinds of battle-array, that may become the leader of these seven and may also withstand in battle Bhishma who is like unto a fire having arrows for its flames ! Give us thy own opinion, O tiger among men, as to who is fit to be our generalissimo !

"Sahadeva said,—'Closely related to us,* sympathising with us in our distress, endued with great might, conversant with every virtue, skilled in weapons, and irresistible in battle, the mighty king of the Matsyas, Virāta, relying upon whom we hope to recover our share of the kingdom, will be able to bear in battle both Bhishma and all those mighty car-warriors ! "

Vaiçampāyana continued.—"After Sahadeva had said this, the eloquent Nakula then said these words :—'He that in years, in knowledge of scriptures, in perseverance, in family and birth, is respectable ; he that is endued with modesty, strength, and prosperity ; he that is well-versed in all branches of learning, he that studied the science of weapons with (the sage) Bharadwāja ; he that is irresistible and firmly devoted to truth ; he that always challenges Drona and the mighty Bhishma ; he that belongs to one of the foremost of royal houses ; he that is a famous leader of hosts ; he that resembles a tree of hundred branches in consequence of sons and grandsons that surround him ; that king who with his wife performed, moved by wrath, the austere penances for the destruction of Drona ; that hero who is an ornament of assemblies ; that bull among monarchs who always cherishes us like a father ; that father-in-law of ours, Drupada, should be our generalissimo ! It is my opinion that he will be able to withstand both Drona and Bhishma rushing to battle, for that

* *Samyukta* is explained by Nilkantha thus. The Burdwan Pandits translate it erroneously.—T.

king is the friend of Angirasa's descendant (Drona) and is conversant with celestial weapons !'

"After the two sons of Mādri had thus expressed their individual opinions, Vāsava's son Savyasāchin who was equal to Vāsava himself, said these words :—'This celestial person of the hue of fire and endued with mighty arms, who sprang into life through the power of ascetic penances and the gratification of sages ; who issued from the sacrificial fire-hole armed with bow and sword, accoutred in armour of steel, mounted on a car unto which were yoked excellent steeds of the best breed, and the clatter of whose car-wheels was as deep as the roar of mighty masses of clouds ; this hero endued with that energy and strength, and, resembling the very lion in frame of body and prowess, and possessed of leonine shoulders, arms, chest, and roar ; this hero of great effulgence ; this warrior of handsome brows, fine teeth, round cheeks, long arms, stout make, excellent thighs, large expansive eyes, excellent legs, and strong frame ; this prince who is incapable of being penetrated by weapons of any kind, and who looks like an elephant with rent temples ; this Dhrishtadyumna, truthful in speech, and with passions under control, was born for the destruction of Drona ! It is this Dhrishtadyumna, I think, that will be able to bear Bhishma's arrows which strike with the vehemence of the thunder-bolt and look like snakes with blazing mouths, which resemble the messengers of Yama in speed and fall like flames of fire (consuming everything they touch), and which were borne before by Rāma alone in battle ! I do not, O king, see the man except Dhrishtadyumna, who is able to withstand Bhishma of great vows. This is even what I think. Endued with great lightness of hand and conversant with all the modes of warfare, accoutred in coat of mail that is incapable of being penetrated by weapons, this handsome hero, resembling the leader of a herd of elephants, is according to my opinion, fit to be our generalissimo !'

"Bhimasena then said,—'That son of Drupada, Cikhandi, who is born for the destruction of Bhishma as is said, O king, by the sages and *Siddhas* assembled together, whose from on the field of battle, while displaying celestial weapons, will be

seen by men to resemble that of the illustrious Rāma himself; I see not, O king, the person who is able to pierce with weapons that Cikhandi, when he is stationed for battle on his car, accoutered in mail! Except the heroic Cikhandi, there is no other warrior who is able to slay Bhishma in single combat. It is for this, O king, that I think Cikhandi is fit to be our generalissimo!

"Yudhishtira said,—'O sire, the strength and weakness, might and feebleness, of everything in the universe, and the intentions of every person here, are well known to the virtuous Keçava! Skilled or unskilled in weapons, old or young, let him be the leader of my forces who may be indicated by Krishna of Daçārha's race! Even he is the root of our success or defeat! In him are our lives, our kingdom, our prosperity and adversity, our happiness and misery! Even he is the Ordainer and Creator. In him is established the fruition of our desires. Let him, therefore, be the leader of our host who may be named by Krishna! Let that foremost of speakers say, for the night approacheth. Having selected our leader, worshipped our weapons (with offerings of flowers and perfumes), we will, at day-break, under Krishna's orders, march to the field of battle!'"

Vaiçampāyana continued.—"Hearing these words of the intelligent king Yudhishtira the just, the lotus-eyed Krishna said, eyeing Dhananjaya the while,—'O king, I fully approve of all those powerful warriors whom ye have named for becoming the leaders of thy troops! All of them are competent to withstand thy foes! Indeed, they can frighten Indra himself in great battle, let alone the covetous and wicked-minded sons of Dhritarāshtra! O thou of mighty arms, for thy good I made great efforts to prevent the battle by bringing about peace! (By that) we have been freed from the debt we owed to virtue. Fault-finding persons will not be able to reproach us for anything. The foolish Duryodhana, destitute of understanding, regardeth himself as skilled in weapons, and though really weak thinketh himself to be possessed of strength! Array thy troops soon, for slaughter is the only means by which they can be made to yield to our demands!

Indeed, the sons of Dhritarāshtra will never be able to keep their ground when they will behold Dhananjaya with Yuyudhāna as his second, and Abhimanyu, and the (five) sons of Draupadi, and Virāta, and Drupada, and the other kings of fierce prowess,—all lords of *Akshauhinis*! Our army is possessed of great strength, and is invincible and incapable of being withstood! Without doubt, it will slay the Dhārta-rāshtra host! As regards our leader, I would name that chastiser of foes, Dhrishtadyumna!"

SECTION CLI.

Vaiçampāyana said.—“When Krishna had said this, all the monarchs (there) were filled with joy. And the shout sent forth by those delighted kings was tremendous. And the troops began to move about with great speed, saying,—*Draw up*,’ ‘*Draw up*.’—And the neighing of steeds and roars of elephants and the clatter of car-wheels and the blare of conchs and the sound of drums, heard everywhere, produced a tremendous din. And teeming with cars and foot-soldiers and steeds and elephants, that invincible host of the marching Pāṇdavas, moving hither and thither, donning their coats of mail, and uttering their war-cries, looked like the (impetuous) current of the Gangā when at its full, agitated with fierce eddies and waves. And in the van (of that host) marched Bhimasena and the two sons of Mādri encased in their coats of mail, and Subhadrā’s son and the (five) sons of Draupadi and Dhrishtadyumna of Prishata’s race. And the Prabhadrakas and the Pāṇchālas marched behind Bhimasena. And the din made by the marching host filled with joy was like unto the roars of the deep when the tide is highest on the day of the new moon. Indeed, the tumult was such that it seemed to reach the very heavens. And capable of breaking hostile ranks, those warriors cased in armour marched thus, filled with joy. And Kunti’s son, king Yudhishtira, amongst them marched, taking with him the carts and other vehicles for transport, the food-stores and fodder, the tents, carriages, and draught-cattle, the cash-chests the machines and weapons,

surgeons and physicians, the invalids, and all the emaciated and weak soldiers, and all the attendants and camp-followers. And the truthful Draupadi, the princess of Pāṇchāla, accompanied by the ladies of the house-hold, and surrounded by servants and maids, remained at Upaplavya. And causing their treasure and ladies to be guarded by bodies of soldiers some of whom were placed as permanent lines of circumvallation and some ordered to move about at a distance from this line, the Pāṇdavas set out with their mighty host. And having made presents of kine and gold to the Brāhmanas who walked around them and uttered blessings, the sons of Pāṇdu commenced the march on their cars decked with jewels. And the (five) princes of Kekaya, and Dhrishtaketu, and the son of the king of the Kāçis, and Crenimat, and Vasudāna, and the invincible Cikhandi, all hale and glad, cased in armour and armed with weapons and decked with ornaments, marched behind Yudhishtira, keeping him in their centre. And in the rear were Virāta, Yajnasena's son of the Somaka race (Dhrishtadyumna), Suçarman,* Kuntibhoja, Dhrishtadyumna's sons, forty thousand cars, five times as much cavalry, infantry ten times more numerous (than the last), and sixty thousand elephants. And Anādhristi, and Chekitāna and Dhrishtaketu and Sātyaki, all marched, surrounding Vāsudeva and Dhananjaya. And reaching the field of Kurukshetra with their forces in battle array, those smiters, the sons of Pāṇdu, looked like roaring bulls. And entering the field, those chastisers of foes blew their conchs. And Vāsudeva and Dhananjaya also blew their conchs. And hearing the blare of the conch called *Pāṇchajanya*,† which resembled the roll of the thunder, all the warriors (of the Pāṇdava army) were filled with joy. And the leonine roars of those warriors endued with lightness of hand and speed of motion, mingling with the

* Some texts read *Sudharman* which seems to be correct, for Suçarman, the ruler of the Trigartas, was on the Kuru side. If, however, there was any other king of that name, the reading, as it stands, may be the true one.—T. *

† The conch owned by Vāsudeva. Schlegel renders it as *Gigantea*.—T.

blare of conchs and beat of drums, made the whole earth, the welkin, and the oceans resound therewith."*

SECTION CLII.

Vaicampāyana said.—“King Yudhishtira then caused his troops to encamp on a part of the field that was level, cool,† and abounding with grass and fuel. Avoiding cemeteries,‡ temples and compounds consecrated to the deities, asylums of sages, shrines,§ and other sacred plots, Kunti’s high-souled son Yudhishtira pitched his camp on a delightful, fertile, open,§ and sacred part of the plain. And rising up again after his animals had been given sufficient rest, the king set out joyously, surrounded by hundreds and thousands of monarchs. And Keçava accompanied by Pārtha began to move about, scattering numerous bodies of Dhārtarāshtra troops (planted as outposts). And Dhrishtadyumna of Prishata’s race and that mighty car-warrior of great energy, viz, Yuyudhāna otherwise called Sātyaki, measured¶ the ground for the encampment. And arrived, O Bhārata, at the holy Hiranwati which flows through Kurukshetra, which was filled with sacred water, and whose bed was divested of pointed pebbles and mire, and which was regarded as an excellent *tirtha*, Keçava caused a moat to be excavated there, and for its protection stationed a

* Most editions make the one hundred and fiftieth Section conclude with the 31st *śloka*. The Burdwan edition, however, extends it so as to include the whole of Section one hundred and fiftyfirst as given here.—T.

† *Snigdha*, perhaps shady.—T.

‡ Or rather, burning grounds.—T.

§ There is no equivalent in English for *tirtha* which is a holy place having a lake, tank, or river by it. There can be no *tirtha* without a piece of sacred natural or artificial water.—T.

§ *Cuchi* is clear or pure. Here, I think, it means divested of under-wood and copses ; hence open.—T.

¶ Perhaps, laid out, or prepared the plan of the encampment. The root *mā*, to measure, is used in various senses more or less connected with the original meaning.—T

sufficient number of troops with proper instructions.* And the rules that were observed in respect of the tents of the high-souled Pāndavas, were followed by Keçava in the matter of the tents he caused to be set up for the kings (that came as their allies). And, O monarch, costly tents, incapable of being attacked, apart from one another, were, by hundreds and thousands, planted for those kings on the surface of the earth, that looked like palatial residences and abounded with fuel and edibles and drinks. And there were assembled hundreds upon hundreds of skilled mechanics in receipt of regular wages, and surgeons and physicians, well-versed in their own science, and furnished with every ingredient they might need. And king Yudhishtira caused to be placed in every pavilion large quantities, high as hills, of bowstrings and bows and coats of mail and weapons, of honey and clarified butter, pounded lac, water, fodder for cattle, chaff and coals, heavy machines, long shafts, lances, battle-axes, bow-staffs, breast-plates, scimitars, and quivers. And innumerable elephants cased in plates of steel with prickles thereon, huge as hills, and capable of fighting with hundreds and thousands,† were seen there. And learning that the Pāndavas had encamped on that field, their allies, O Bhārata, with their forces and animals, began to march thither. And many kings who had practised *Brahmacharya* vows, drunk (consecrated) *Soma*, and made large presents to Brāhmanas at sacrifices, came there for the success of the sons of Pāndu.”

* Many texts read *chādriṣyam* meaning ‘invisible’ (leaving out the particle *cha*) and qualifying *Valam*. Some texts, however, read *chādiṣya* meaning ‘having commanded,’ or ‘having given instructions.’ I think the latter reading is correct.—T.

† Fighting with hundreds and thousands of other elephants, as explained by Nilakantha. It may mean that these elephants were competent to fight with hundreds and thousands of foot-soldiers as well.—T.

SECTION CLIII.

Janamejaya said,—“Hearing that Yudhishtira had, with his troops, marched from desire of battle and encamped on Kurukshetra, protected by Vāsudeva, and aided by Virāta and Drupada with their sons, and surrounded by the Kekayas, the Vrishnis, and other kings by hundreds, and watched over by numerous mighty car-warriors like the great Indra himself by the *Adityas*, what measures were concerted by king Duryodhana? O high-souled one, I desire to hear in detail all that happened in Kurujāngala on that frightful occasion! The sons of Pāndu, with Vāsudeva and Virāta and Drupada and Dhrishtadyumna the Pāñchāla prince and that mighty car-warrior Cikhandi and the powerful Yudhāmanyu incapable of being resisted by the very gods, might trouble the deities themselves in battle with Indra at their head! I, therefore, desire to hear in detail, O thou that art possessed of wealth of asceticism, all the acts of the Kurus and the Pāndavas as they happened!”

Vaiçampāyana said.—“When he of Daçārha’s race had departed (from the Kuru court), king Duryodhana, addressing Karna and Duṣṣāsana and Cakuni, said these words:—‘Keçava* hath gone to the sons of Prithā, without having been able to achieve his object. Filled with wrath as he is, he will surely stimulate the Pāndavas. A battle between myself and Pāndavas is much desired by Vāsudeva. Bhimasena and Arjuna are ever of the same mind with him. Yudhishtira, again, is very much under the influence of Bhimasena. Before this, Yudhishtira with all his brothers was persecuted by me. Virāta and Drupada I had waged hostilities with. Obedient to Vāsudeva both of them have become the leaders of Yudhishtira’s host. The battle, therefore, that will take place will be a fierce and terrific one. Casting off all sloth, cause every preparation to be made for the encounter! Let the kings (my allies) plant their tents by hundreds and thou-

* The word used here is *Adhokshaja* one of the many names of Krishna, meaning ‘beyond the senses’ ken.—T.

sands on Kurukshetra, all of which must be spacious, incapable of being approached by enemies, near enough to places abounding with water and fuel, in such positions that the communications thereto for sending supplies may not be stopped at any time by the foe,*—full of weapons of diverse kinds, and decked with banners and flags. Let the road from our city to the camp be made level for their march. Let it be proclaimed this very day, without loss of time, that our march will commence tomorrow!—(Hearing these words of the king), they said,—‘So be it,’—and when the morrow came, those high-souled persons did everything they had been commanded to do for the accomodation of the monarchs. And all those monarchs (meanwhile), hearing the king’s command, rose up from their costly seats, filled with wrath (having the foe for its object). And they began to slowly rub their mace-like arms blazing with bracelets of gold and decked with the paste of sandal and other fragrant substances. And they also commenced, with those lotus-like hands of theirs, to wear their head-gears and lower and upper garments and diverse kinds of ornaments. And many foremost of car-warriors began to superintend the furnishing of their cars, and persons conversant with horse-lore began to harness their steeds, while those versed in matters relating to elephants began to equip those huge animals. And all those warriors began to wear diverse kinds of beautiful armour made of gold, and arm themselves with various weapons. And the foot-soldiers began to take up various kinds of arms and case their bodies in various kinds of armour decorated with gold. And, O Bhārata, the city of Duryodhana then, filled as it was with rejoicing millions, wore the bright aspect of a festive occasion. And, O king, the Kuru capital at the prospect of battle looked like the ocean on the appearance of the moon, with the vast crowds of humanity representing it waters with their eddies, the cars, elephants, and horses representing its fishes, the tumult of conchs and drums its roar, the treasure-chests

* The original compound is *Acchedyāhāramārgāni*. Nilakantha explains it correctly. The Bardwan Pundits render it wrongly.—T.

its jewels and gems, the diverse kinds of ornaments and armour its waves, the bright weapons its white foam, the rows of houses the mountains on its beach, and the roads and shops like the deep lakes of that main !”

SECTION CLIV.

Vaiçampāyana said:—“Recollecting the words spoken by Vāsudeva, Yudhishtira once more addressed that scion of Vrishni’s race, saying,—‘How, O Keçava, could the wicked Duryodhana say it ? O thou of unfading glory, what should we do in view of the occasion that hath come ? By acting in what way may we keep on the track of our duty ?* Thou, O Vāsudeva, art acquainted with the views of Duryodhana, Karna, and Cakuni the son of Suvala ! Thou knowest also what views are entertained by myself and my brothers ! Thou hast heard the words uttered by both Vidura and Bhishma ! O thou of great wisdom, thou hast also heard in their entirety the words of wisdom spoken by Kunti ! Overlooking all these, tell us, O thou of mighty arms, after reflection, and without hesitation, that which is for our good !†

“Hearing these words of king Yudhishtira the just that were fraught with virtue and profit, Krishna replied, in a voice deep as that of the clouds or cymbals, saying,—‘Redounding to his advantage and consistent with both virtue and profit, those words that were uttered by me (in the Kuru court) found no response in the Kuru prince Duryodhana with whom deceit supplieth the place of wisdom ! That wretch of wicked understanding listeneth not in the least to the counsels of Bhishma or Vidura or mine. He transgresseth everybody. He wisheth not to earn virtue, nor doth he wish for

* Literally, “may not fall off from the duties of our order !”—T.

† What Yudhishtira asks Vāsudeva is that without regarding the views expressed by others, Vāsudeva should advise, according to his own judgment, as to what the Pāndavas should do. His knowledge of the views entertained by all parties would greatly help him in coming to a right conclusion.—T.

fame. That wicked-souled wight, relying upon Karna, regardeth everything as already won! Indeed, Suyodhana even ordered my incarceration! Of wicked heart and sinful in his resolves, he did not, however, obtain the fruition of that wish! Neither Bhishma nor Drōṇa said anything on that subject. Indeed, all of them follow Duryodhana, except Vidura, O thou of unfading glory! Cakuni the son of Suvala, and Karna, and Duṣṣāsana, all equally foolish, gave the foolish and vindictive Duryodhana much improper advice regarding thee! Indeed, what use is there in my repeating to thee all that the Kuru prince hath said? In brief, that wicked-souled wight beareth no good will towards thee! Not even in all these kings together, that form thy army, is that (measure of) sinfulness and wickedness which resideth in Duryodhana alone! As regards ourselves, we do not desire to make peace with the Kauravas by abandoning our property. War, therefore, is that which should now take place!"

Vaiṣampāyana continued.—"Hearing these words uttered by Vāsudeva, all the kings (there present), O Bhārata, without saying anything, looked at Yudhishtira's face. And Yudhishtira, understanding the intention of those monarchs, said, with Bhima and Arjuna and the twins,—*Array (the troops)!*"—And the word of command having been passed, a great uproar rose amongst the Pāṇḍava army and all the soldiers were filled with joy. King Yudhishtira the just, however, beholding the (impending) slaughter of those that deserved not to be slain, began to sigh deeply, and addressing Bhimasena and Vijaya, said,—"That for the sake of which I accepted an exile into the woods and for which I suffered so much misery, that great calamity overtaketh us of a set purpose! That for which we strove so much leaveth us as if on account of our very striving! On the other hand, a great distress overtaketh us although we did nothing to invite it! How shall we fight with those reverend superiors (of ours) whom we on no account can slay? What kind of victory shall we achieve by slaying our preceptors of venerable age?"

"Hearing these words of king Yudhishtira the just, Savyasāchin repeated to his elder brother all those words that

Vāsudeva had said. And addressing Yudhishtira, Arjuna continued,—‘Thou hast, O king, certainly understood all the words spoken by Kunti and Vidura that were repeated to thee by Devaki’s son! I know it for certain that neither Vidura nor Kunti would say anything that is sinful! Besides this, O son of Kunti, we cannot withdraw without engaging in battle!’

“Hearing this speech of Savyasāchin, Vāsudeva also said unto Pārtha,—‘It is even so (as thou hast said)!’—The sons of Pāndu then, O great king, made up their minds for war, and passed that night with their soldiers in great happiness.”

SECTION CLV.

Vaiçampāyana said.—“After that night had passed away, king Duryodhana, O Bhārata, distributed (in proper order) his eleven *Akshauhini*s of troops. And arranging his men, elephants, cars, and steeds, into three classes, *viz*, superior, middling, and inferior, the king distributed them amongst his divisions (by placing them in the van, centre, and rear of the ranks). And furnished with timber and planks for repairing the damages their cars might sustain in the press of battle, with large quivers borne on cars, with tiger-skins and other stiff leather for enveloping the sides of cars, with barbed javelins to be hurled by the hand, with quivers borne on the backs of steeds and elephants, with long-handled spears of iron used as missiles, with quivers borne on the backs of foot-soldiers, with heavy clubs of wood, with flagstaves and banners, with long heavy shafts shot from bows, with diverse kinds of nooses and lassoes, with armour of various kinds, with short pointed clubs of wood, with oil, treacle, and sand,* with earthen pots filled with poisonous snakes,† with pulverised lac and other inflammable matter, with short spears furnished with tinkling bells, with diverse weapons of iron and machines for hurling

* These were heated and thrown upon the enemy.—T.

† These also were thrown into the midst of the enemy’s ranks for causing confusion.—T.

hot treacle, water, and stones, with whistling clubs of hard wood, with wax and heavy mallets, with clubs of wood having iron spikes, with plough-poles and poisoned darts, with long syringes for pouring warm treacle and planks of cane,* with battle-axes and forked lances, with spiked gauntlets, with axes and pointed iron spikes, with cars having their sides covered with skins of tigers and leopards, with sharp-edged circular planks of wood, with horns, with javelins and various other weapons of attack, with axes of the *kuthāra* species and spades, with cloths steeped in oil, and with clarified butter, the diverse divisions of Duryodhana, glittering with robes embroidered with gold and decked with various kinds of jewels and gems and consisting of warriors endued with handsome persons, blazed forth like fire ! And cased in coats of mail and well-skilled in weapons and accomplished in horse-lore, brave persons of good birth were employed as car-drivers. And all the cars were furnished with various weapons and drugs, and with horses having rows of bells and pearls on their heads, and with banners and flagstuffs, and with ornaments gracing their steeples and turrets, and with shields, swords, and lances, and javelins and spiked maces. And unto each of those cars were yoked four steeds of the best breed. And upon each of them were kept a hundred bows. And each car had one driver in charge of the couple of steeds in front, and two drivers in charge of the couple of steeds attached to the wheels on the two sides. And both of the last-mentioned drivers were skilled car-warriors, while the car-warrior himself was also skilled in driving steeds. And thousands of cars, thus furnished and decked with gold, and protected like fortified towns and incapable of being conquered by foes, were stationed on all sides. And the elephants also were furnished with rows of bells and pearls and decked with diverse ornaments. And on the back of each of those animals mounted seven warriors. And in consequence of such accoutrements those animals looked like hills graced with jewels. And amongst the seven, two were

* For protecting the combatants from warm water, treacle, wax, oil, and other hot liquids.—T

armed with hooks, two were excellent bowmen, two were first-rate swordsmen, and one, O king, was armed with a lance and a trident. And, O king, the army of the illustrious Kuru king teemed with innumerable infuriate elephants, bearing on their backs loads of weapons and quivers filled with arrows. And there were also thousands of steeds ridden by brave soldiers accoutered in mail, decked in ornaments, and furnished with flags. And numbering in hundreds and thousands, all those steeds were free from the habit of scratching the ground with their forefeet. And they were all well-trained, and decked with ornaments of gold, and exceedingly obedient to their riders. And of foot-soldiers there were hundreds of thousands, of diverse mien, accoutered in armour of diverse kinds and armed also with weapons of diverse species, and decked with golden ornaments. And unto each car were assigned ten elephants, and unto each elephant ten horses, and unto each horse ten foot-soldiers, as protectors. Again, a large body of troops was kept as a reserve for rallying the ranks that would be broken. And this reserve consisted of cars unto each of which were attached fifty elephants; and unto each elephant were attached a hundred horses; and unto each horse were attached seven foot-soldiers. Five hundred cars, as many elephants, (fifteen hundred horses, and two thousand five hundred foot-soldiers) constitute a *Senā*. Ten *Senās* constitute a *Pritanā*; and ten *Pritanās*, a *Vāhini*. In common parlance, however, the words *Senā*, *Vāhini*, *Pritanā*, *Dhwajini*, *Chamu*, *Akshauhini*, and *Varuthini* are used in the same sense.

"It was thus that the intelligent Kaurava arrayed his force. Between the two sides, the total number was eighteen *Akshauhinis*. Of this, the Pāndava force consisted of seven *Akshaunis*, while the Kauravas force consisted of ten *Akshauhinis* and one more. Five times fifty men constitute a *Patti*. Three *Pattis* make a *Senā mukha* or *Gulma*. Three *Gulmas* make a *Guna*. In Duryodhana's army there were thousands and hundreds of such *Ganas* consisting of warriors capable of smiting (the foe) and longing for battle. And the mighty-armed king Duryodhana, selecting from among them brave and intelligent warriors, made them the leaders of his troops. And

placing an *Akshauhini* of troops under each of those best of men, *viz*, Kripa, Drona, Calya, Jayadratha the king of the Sindhus, Sudakshina the ruler of the Kāmvojas, Kirtavarman, Drona's son (Açwatthāman), Karna, Bhuriçravas, Cakuni the son of Suvala, and the mighty Vālhika, the king used to bring them daily before him and at all hours, and speak to them. And he repeatedly offered them worship before his very eyes. And thus appointed, all those warriors, with all their followers, became desirous of doing what was most agreeable to the king."

SECTION CLVI.

Vaiçampāyana said.—"Dhritarāshtra's son, accompanied by all the kings, then addressed Bhishma the son of Cāntanu, and with joined hands said these words:—'Without a commander, even a mighty army is routed in battle like a swarm of ants. The intelligence of two persons can never agree. Different commanders again are jealous of one another as regards their prowess. O thou of great wisdom, it is heard (by us) that (once on a time) the Brāhmanas, raising a standard of *kuça* grass, encountered in battle the Kshatriyas of the *Haihaya* clan endued with immeasurable energy. O grandsire, the Vaiçyas and the Cudras followed the Brāhmanas, so that all the three orders were on one side, while those bulls among the Kshatriyas were alone on the other. In the battles, however, that ensued, the three orders repeatedly broke, while the Kshatriyas, though alone, vanquished the large army that was opposed to them. Then those best of Brāhmanas enquired of the Kshatriyas themselves (as to the cause of this). O grandsire, those that were virtuous among the Kshatriyas returned the true answer to the enquirers, saying,—In battle we obey the orders of one person endued with great intelligence, while ye are disunited from one another and act according to your individual understandings!—The Brāhmanas then appointed one amongst themselves as their commander, who was brave and conversant with the ways of policy. And they then succeeded in vanquishing the Kshatriyas. Thus people always conquer

their foes in battle who appoint a skilled, brave, and sinless commander observing the good of the forces under him. As regards thee, thou art equal to Uçanas himself, and always seekest my good ! Incapable of being slain, thou art, again, devoted to virtue. Be thou, therefore, our commander ! Like the sun among all luminaries, like the moon unto all deciduous herbs, like Kuvera among the *Yakshas*, like Vāsava among the gods, like Meru among mountains, Suparna among birds, Kumāra among the gods, Havyavāha among Vasus, thou art amongst ourselves ! Like the gods protected by Cakra, ourselves, protected by thee, will assuredly become unvanquishable by the very gods ! Like Agni's son (Kumāra) at the head of the gods, march thou at our head, and let us follow thee like calves following the lead of a mighty bull !

“Bhishma said,—‘O mighty-armed one, it is even so, O Bhārata, as thou sayest ! But the Pāndavas are as dear to me as ye yourselves ! Therefore, O king, I should certainly seek their good as well, although I shall certainly fight for thee, having given thee a pledge (before) to that effect ! I do not see the warrior on earth that is equal to me, except that tiger among men, Dhananjaya the son of Kunti ! Endued with great intelligence, he is conversant with innumerable celestial weapons. That son of Pāndu, however, will never fight with me openly ! With the power of my weapons I can, in a trice, destroy this universe consisting of gods, *Asuras*, *Rākshasas*, and human being ! The sons of Pāndu, however, O king, are incapable of being exterminated by me.* I shall, therefore, slay every day ten thousand warriors. If, indeed, they do not slay me in battle first, I will continue to slaughter their forces thus ! There is another understanding on which I may willingly become the commander of thy forces. It be-

* The word used is *Utsādanīyās*. Literally, it means *exterminatable*. Nilakantha explains it (with the negative particle before) as “incapable of being exterminated ;” it may also mean “should not be exterminated !” It is not easy to determine from the word itself whether Bhishma denies his competence or expresses his unwillingness to slay the Pāndavas.—T.

hoveth thee to listen to that. O lord of Earth, either Karna should fight first, or I will fight first. The *Suta's* son always boasts of his prowess in battle comparing it with mine !

"Karna said,—‘As long as Gangā's son liveth, O king, I shall never fight! After Bhishma is slain, I shall fight with the wielder of *Gāndiva*.’"

Vaiçampāyana continued.—“After this, Dhritarāshtra's son duly made Bhishma the commander of his forces, distributing large presents. And after his installation in the command, he blazed forth with beauty. And at the king's behest, musicians cheerfully played upon drums and blew conchs by hundreds and thousands. And numerous leonine shouts were sent forth and all the animals in the camp uttered their cries together. And although the sky was cloudless, a bloody shower fell and made the ground miry. And fierce whirl-winds, and earthquakes, and roars of elephants, occurring, depressed the hearts of all the warriors. Incorporeal voices and flashes of meteoric falls were heard and seen in the welkin. And jackals, howling fiercely, foreboded great danger. And, O monarch, these and a hundred other kinds of fierce portents made their appearance when the king installed Gangā's son in the command of his troops. And after making Bhishma—that grinder of hostile hosts—his general, and having also caused by abundant gifts of kine and gold the Brāhmanas to pronounce benedictions on him, and glorified by those benedictions, and surrounded by his troops, and with Gangā's son in the van, and accompanied by his brothers, Duryodhana marched to Kurukshatra with his large host. And the Kuru king, going over the plain with Karna in his company, caused his camp to be measured out on a level part, O monarch, of that plain. And the camp, pitched on a delightful and fertile spot abounding with grass and fuel, shone like Hāstīnapura itself.”

SECTION CLVII.

Janamejaya said,—“When Yudhishtira heard that Bhishma the high-souled son of Gangā, the foremost of all wielders of weapons, the grandsire of the Bharātas, the head of all the kings, the rival of Vrihaspati in intellect, resembling the ocean in gravity, the mountains of Himavat in calmness, the Creator himself in nobleness, and the Sun in energy, and capable of slaying hostile hosts like the great Indra himself by showering his arrows; was installed, till his removal by death, in the command of the Kuru army on the eve of the great sacrifice of battle, terrific in its mien and capable of making one's hair stand on end, what did that mighty-armed son of Pāndu, that foremost of all wielders of weapons, say? What also did Bhima and Arjuna say? And what too did Krishna say?”

Vaiçampāyana said.—“(When news was received of this), Yudhishtira endowed with great intelligence and well-acquainted with what should be done in view of dangers and calamities, summoned all his brothers and also the eternal Vāsudeva (to his presence). And that foremost of speakers then said in a mild voice,—‘Make your rounds among the soldiers, and remain carefully, casing yourselves in mail! Our first encounter will be with our grandsire. Look ye for (seven) leaders for the seven *Akshauhinis* of my troops!’

“Krishna said,—‘Those words of grave import, which, O bull of the Bharata race, it behoveth thee to utter on an occasion like this, have, indeed, been uttered by thee! Even this, O mighty-armed one, is what I also like! Let, therefore, that be done which should be done next. Let, indeed, seven leaders be selected for thy army!’”

Vaiçampāyana continued.—“Summoning then those warriors eager for battle, viz, Drupada, and Virāta, and that bull of Cini's race, and Dhrishtadyumna the prince of Pāñchāla, and king Dhrishtaketu, and prince Cikhandi of Pāñchāla, and Sahadeva the ruler of the Magadhas, Yudhishtira duly installed them in the commands of his seven divisions. And above them all was placed in command of all the troops

